

THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
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LEGISLATION NO: 0020-25

SPONSOR: Crystalyn Curley

TITLE: An Action Relating to the Naabik'iyáti' Committee; Supporting Colorado House Bill No. 25-1204 Titled "Colorado Indian Child Welfare Act"

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET

Tracking No. 0020-25

DATE: February 28, 2025

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; SUPPORTING COLORADO HOUSE BILL NO. 25-1204 TITLED "COLORADO INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT"

PURPOSE: This proposed resolution will provide the Navajo Nation's support of Colorado House Bill #25-1204.

FINAL AUTHORITY: Naabik'íyáti' Committee

VOTING REQUIREMENT: Simple Majority

This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committees. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD:
Website Posting Time/Date:
Posting End Date: 03-05-26
Eligible for Action: 03-06-25

1 PROPOSED NAVAJO NATION STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION
2 25th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL – Third Year, 2025

3 INTRODUCED BY

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6 (Sponsor)

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9 TRACKING NO. 0020-25

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11 AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE;
12 SUPPORTING COLORADO HOUSE BILL NO. 25-1204 TITLED "COLORADO
13 INDIAN CHILD WELFARE ACT"

14
15 **WHEREAS:**

- 16
17 A. The Navajo Nation established the Naabik'iyáti' Committee as Navajo Nation
18 Council standing committee and as such empowered the Naabik'iyáti' Committee to
19 coordinate all requests for information, appearances and testimony relating to
20 proposed county, state and federal legislation impacting the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C.
21 §§ 700(A), 701(A)(6).
- 22 B. The Navajo Nation has a government-to-government relationship with the State of
23 Colorado.
- 24 C. There is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of the
25 Navajo Nation than its own children.
- 26 D. American Indian tribes have existed since time immemorial and pre-date the United
27 States Constitution. Since the founding of the United States, there is a well-
28 documented history of genocide, diminishment, and attempted assimilation of Indians
29 by the United States, both on a federal and state level, which includes, but not limited
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1 to the removal of Navajo children from their homes and placed into foster care and
2 adoption.

3 E. The United States Congress enacted the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), in 1978,
4 to combat the excessive removal of Navajo children from their homes. ICWA, itself,
5 acknowledged, “an alarmingly high percentage of Indian [and Navajo] families are
6 broken up by removal” and children were taken, “from [homes] by nontribal public
7 and private agencies.” “This separation of Indian [and Navajo] children from their
8 families, is perhaps the most tragic and destructive aspect of American Indian [and
9 Navajo] life today.”

10 F. ICWA improved child welfare systems all over the United States for American Indian
11 [and Navajo] children and became the “gold standard” in child welfare policy and
12 practice. ICWA creates procedural and substantive protections to help the Navajo
13 Nation and Navajo families combat the loss of identity that was occurring because of
14 governmental policies which facilitated the removal of Navajo children from their
15 homes.

16 G. In 2019, Colorado adopted amendments to align Colorado’s statute with the updated
17 ICWA regulations to ensure compliance with federal law.

18 H. In 2023, the Colorado General Assembly enacted SB 23-211 with broad support to
19 adopt and incorporate federal ICWA and ICWA regulations as Colorado law.

20 I. During the 2025 Regular Session, Colorado State Senators Monica Duran and Junie
21 Josph introduced Colorado House Bill #25-1204 (“House Bill #25-1204”) titled
22 “Colorado Indian Child Welfare Act” which can be accessed at
23 <http://leg.colorado.gov/bills/hb25-1204>.

24 J. The Navajo Nation worked with the Colorado working group to review and discuss
25 the Colorado Indian Child Welfare Act (CO ICWA), House Bill #25-1204, which
26 seeks to align state child welfare practices with the principles and requirements of the
27 federal ICWA.

28 K. The CO ICWA intends to protect Indian [Navajo] children’s best interest by
29 maintaining their natural family’s relationship or placing them with the other Indian
30 families with similar cultural values and heritage.

1 L. The Navajo Nation supports the passage of CO ICWA as a vital measure to protect
2 the rights of Indian [Navajo] children, uphold tribal sovereignty, and strengthen the
3 collaboration between Colorado's child welfare agencies and tribal governments.
4

5 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:**

6 A. The Navajo Nation hereby provides its support for the successful passage of House
7 Bill #25-1204, CO ICWA, during the 2025 Colorado General Assembly Session.

8 B. The Navajo Nation urges all Colorado legislators to support House Bill #25-1204 and
9 ensure its implementation to protect the well-being and cultural identity of our Navajo
10 children and families in the state of Colorado.

11 C. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee hereby authorizes the Navajo Nation President, and the
12 Navajo Nation Speaker to take all steps necessary to advocate for the Navajo Nation's
13 position with respect to House Bill #25-1204.
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