



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Naabik'iyatí Committee supports legislation advocating for Indigenous representation in Federal Dietary Guidelines



Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez, sponsor of Legislation 0010-25, emphasizes the importance of federal nutrition policies that impact the dietary traditions and health disparities.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Thursday, the Naabik'iyatí Committee approved Legislation No. 0010-25, reinforcing the Nation's support for Indigenous representation in federal dietary policies and endorsing the Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee.

The resolution corresponds with written comments submitted by Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), urging federal agencies to recognize the nutritional needs and traditional food systems of tribal communities.

"The passage of this legislation is a significant milestone in ensuring that traditional Diné nutritional needs are represented in federal dietary guidelines," said Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez, sponsor of the legislation. "This resolution affirms our commitment to advocating for policies that prioritize the health and well-being of our Diné people."

The legislation emphasizes the importance of federal nutrition policies that account for the dietary traditions and health disparities within tribal populations. The Navajo Nation has historically faced disproportionately high rates of diet-related illnesses, including Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and hypertension. Federal food assistance programs, which often prioritize dairy and processed foods, have exacerbated these health issues by failing to accommodate the dietary realities of Native populations.

The resolution calls for direct tribal consultation with HHS and USDA to ensure the final 2025 Dietary Guidelines reflect Navajo Nation's perspectives. President Nygren's comments submitted in August 2024 urged federal agencies to recognize traditional plant-based foods such as corn, beans, and squash and to reconsider dietary recommendations that overemphasize dairy consumption, which disproportionately affects Native Americans due to high rates of lactose intolerance.

"Nutrition policy should be inclusive and culturally competent," said Speaker Crystalne Curley, "The current one-size-fits-all approach does not work for our communities, where lactose intolerance is common, and where traditional foods provide essential nutrients. Our resolution sends a strong message that Diné voices must be heard in shaping national nutrition policies."

The resolution also reaffirms the federal government's responsibility to uphold its treaty obligations to the Navajo Nation by ensuring tribal representation in health and nutrition policies. The Naabik'iyatí' Committee's unanimous approval of the legislation reflects the Navajo Nation's broader commitment to advancing policies that promote health equity and food sovereignty.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council will continue working with federal agencies, tribal health organizations, and advocacy groups to influence federal nutrition policies. The resolution will be formally submitted to HHS and USDA, along with a request for direct consultation, to ensure that Indigenous recommendations are incorporated into the final 2025 Dietary Guidelines.

The Naabik'iyatí Committee is the final authority for Legislation No. 0010-25, which was approved with a vote of 18 in favor and none oppose.

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