



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Naabik'íyáti' Committee backs removal of unconfirmed executive directors



Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton calls for removal of directors who served beyond the three-month limit without formal confirmation.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On June 12, the 25th Navajo Nation Council's Naabik'íyáti' Committee approved Legislation No. 0093-25, recommending the removal of five Executive Branch division directors who have not received official confirmation by the Navajo Nation Council.

The legislation, sponsored by Council Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton, calls for the removal of the following unconfirmed directors: Sherylene Yazzie (Department of Health), Reycita Toddy (Division of Human Resources), Tony Skrelunas (Division of Economic Development), Bryon C. Shorty (Telecommunications Regulatory Commission), and Candice Yazzie (Division of Community Development). Each has served beyond the three-month limit allowed under Navajo law without formal confirmation.

"I dropped this legislation for the purposes of following the laws and Navajo Nation Code," said Council Delegate Charles-Newton. "Per the law, the requirement is that the president appoints the division directors and the Navajo Nation Council confirms their appointments. These individuals have not gone through the process of being confirmed."

Speaker Crystalyne Curley emphasized the Council's legislative authority and the importance of upholding the Navajo Nation Code.

"When appointments go unconfirmed for months or even years, it undermines our governmental checks and balances," said Speaker Curley. "The Council has the duty to confirm or reject appointments—not to be bypassed. This action is about accountability, not personalities."

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty also raised concerns about the precedent being set.

"Our people expect transparency and lawful procedure," Delegate Crotty said. "This legislation reinforces that executive directors must follow proper protocol, and that the Council will not tolerate indefinite interim appointments."

Delegate Charles-Newton added that the legislation is a necessary corrective step.

"We need to hold these directors accountable to assess if they are right for the job," she said. "We are paying these individuals as if they have been confirmed. Actions taken by these individuals can't stand as they haven't been confirmed."

She also noted that there is still time for the directors to go through the confirmation process.

The resolution states that the Navajo Nation President failed to seek timely confirmation of the five appointees and that the continued service of unconfirmed directors violates several provisions of Navajo Nation Code, including 2 N.N.C. § 102(F) and 2 N.N.C. § 1005(F)(1).

Section Three of the resolution recommends that if formal confirmation is not enacted by the close of the 2025 Summer Session, the Navajo Nation President should remove the five individuals from their positions.

The Naabik'íyáti' Committee passed the resolution with a vote of 12 in favor and five opposed. Final action on the resolution now rests with the full Navajo Nation Council, which is expected to deliberate on the matter during the upcoming Summer Session.

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