

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

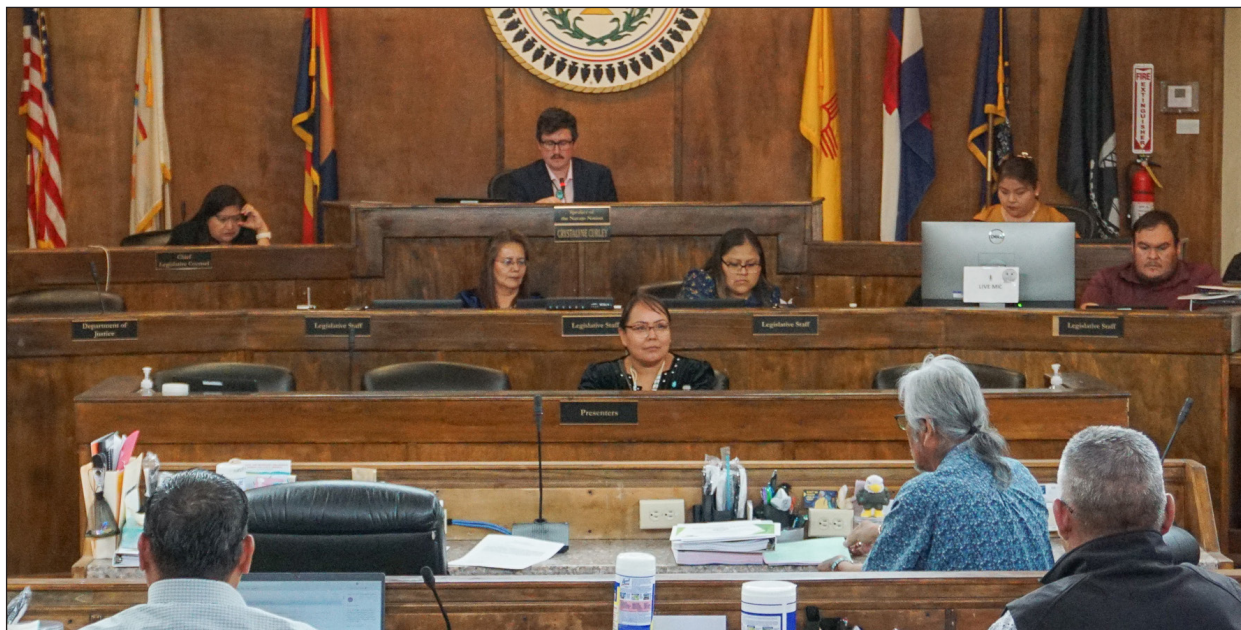
25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

MEDIA CONTACT:

nnlb.communications@gmail.com

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Speaker Curley submits formal comments to the federal government in response to President Trump's Executive Order 14210



Speaker Crystalyne Curley submitted a formal written position on the federal government's proposed restructuring plans for Indian Affairs programs.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Monday, 25th Navajo Nation Council Speaker Crystalyne Curley submitted formal written comments to the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), outlining the Navajo Nation's position on the federal government's proposed restructuring plans for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Bureau of Indian Education (BIE), and other key Indian Affairs programs.

Speaker Curley worked with the Navajo Nation Washington Office and other Executive Branch offices to draft written comments which were legislated and unanimously approved by the Naabik'íyáti' Committee on July 3.

Legislation No. 0160-25 authorized formal comments in response to the "Department of Government Efficiency" Workforce Optimization Initiative under Executive Order 14210, which proposes consolidating or realigning services within federal agencies including Indian Affairs to increase efficiency.

In accordance with the legislation, the Nation strongly opposes any proposed consolidation of the Navajo Area BIA Region and programs. It further states that the initiative could undermine the delivery of essential services, limit tribal consultation, and violate treaty obligations.

The Navajo Nation's formal written comments provide detailed concerns related to education, law enforcement, funding access, and self-governance.

The comments reference a pattern of federal actions carried out without prior consultation, including the withholding of payments to tribal governments, circulation of lease termination notices for Indian Health Service facilities, and hiring freezes within the BIE and BIA. These actions disrupted services and contributed to instability in school systems and healthcare delivery.

The comments also highlight the impact of federal workforce reductions on educational institutions, including the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute and Haskell Indian Nations University. Staffing shortages, vacant positions, and deteriorating infrastructure were cited as contributing factors in diminishing student success and delaying academic progress.

The response also notes the effects on K–12 schools operating under the BIE system, which are already managing complex rural and under-resourced conditions.

The Nation's position further asserts that any consolidation or restructuring efforts within Indian Affairs must preserve tribal self-governance, uphold trust responsibilities, and avoid a one-size-fits-all approach.

Recommendations submitted by Speaker Curley include calls for direct recurring appropriations, improved technical assistance, centralized funding portals, and permanent regional tribal advisory bodies to ensure consistent Tribal engagement in federal decision-making.

The comments underscore the importance of preserving the capacity of the Office of Justice Services (OJS), particularly in the context of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) crisis. The letter describes the MMIP crisis as a pressing concern for the Navajo Nation, with more than 60 Diné individuals currently missing. Staffing shortages, lack of interagency coordination, and limited forensic resources were cited as barriers to resolution.

The comments also emphasize that tribes must not be forced to compete for base law enforcement and education funding. The letter also calls attention to the "Bad Men Clause" of the 1868 Treaty, which requires the United States to protect the Navajo people from harm, underscoring the legal obligation to ensure public safety in Indian Country.

The legislation authorizes the Navajo Nation leaders to take necessary steps to advocate for the Nation's position. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee approved the bill with a vote of 17 in favor with none opposed, and serves as the final authority for the legislation.

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