



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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25th Navajo Nation Council unanimously approves legislation to relocate the Youth Advisory Council under the Legislative Branch



Council Delegate Germaine Simonson, sponsor of the legislation.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council unanimously approved Legislation No. 0066-25, transferring the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council (NYAC) from the Executive Branch to the Legislative Branch. The unanimous vote strengthens the NYAC's role as an official legislative body representing Diné youth, with oversight by the Naabik'íyáti' Committee.

The legislation marks a milestone in Navajo youth empowerment, reflecting the Council's commitment to ensuring that young people have direct access to the government, as well as meaningful opportunities to learn about lawmaking, develop leadership skills, and participate in policy-making rooted in Diné values.

"This legislation is about more than a structural change; it's a promise to our young people that we see them, we believe in them, and we are preparing them to lead," said Council Delegate Germaine Simonson, the sponsor of the legislation. "By bringing NYAC into the Legislative Branch, we are giving our future leaders the knowledge, access, and cultural grounding they need to shape our government with strength and purpose."

The NYAC was established in 2017 to provide a platform for youth to advocate on issues directly impacting Diné children and families. Under Legislation No. 0066-25, the NYAC becomes a 12-member advisory board composed of Diné youth ages 14 to 24. Each of the five agencies will have representation, along with two at-large members appointed by the

Speaker. Members will serve two-year terms, and upon confirmation, will elect a Chair and Vice Chair and hold regular meetings.

"This is a critical step toward ensuring that our youth have not only a seat at the table, but the opportunity to learn how the table is built," said Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, a co-sponsor. "Our young people deserve a space to speak, grow, and lead with confidence, knowing their voices matter and their ideas are supported by the community and by those who came before them."

Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez echoed the message of support. "Young people bring fresh ideas and new energy. Our job as leaders is to support those ideas with guidance and resources. This legislation gives us the structure to do exactly that."

Council Delegate Cherilyn Yazzie expressed her strong support for the legislation. "This shows our commitment to seeing our youth grow as future leaders. Under the Legislative Branch, we can provide deeper knowledge about how our government functions and how laws are made," said Yazzie.

The new plan of operation also calls for the creation of an Executive Director position to support the NYAC's day-to-day functions, including drafting resolutions, coordinating meetings, and ensuring adherence to Diné Fundamental Law and Navajo Nation policies. The NYAC will be required to present quarterly reports to the Naabik'íyáti' Committee and will have the authority to propose youth-led programs and initiatives.

"This is a generational investment," said Delegate Simonson. "Supporting our youth is a responsibility we all share. We are laying the foundation for a government that includes, listens to, and is shaped by the next generation."

Passed on a consent agenda with a final vote of 20 in favor and none opposed, which represents the full backing of the 25th Navajo Nation Council and affirms a united commitment to elevate Diné youth in governance.

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