



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Law and Order Committee Chairwoman Charles-Newton presses for accountability on federal funding, public safety, and transparency during the Coalition of Large Tribes meeting



Law and Order Committee Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton joined the Coalition of Large Tribes for a high-level meeting with Acting Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Scott Davis.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On September 9, Law and Order Committee Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton joined the Coalition of Large Tribes (COLT) for a high-level meeting with Acting Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Scott Davis.

The discussion focused on urgent tribal concerns, including the delayed release of the federal “Green Book,” structural issues within the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), chronic underfunding for public safety, and the lack of transparency in strategic planning at the federal level.

Chairwoman Charles-Newton represented the Navajo Nation and raised questions about the status of the “Green Book,” an outline for establishing and maintaining an effective internal control system that protects public resources. She emphasized that without access to the Green Book, tribes are left in the dark, unable to make informed decisions about essential services such as education, healthcare, and public safety.

“We hear reports of funding increases, but on the ground, we’re seeing the opposite, a complete decrease across the board,” said Chair Charles-Newton. “A few years ago, we saw significant funding going to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Indian Education, and Indian Health Service. But now that’s reversed. The Green Book helps us track where the money is going. Without it, we’re at a disadvantage, not just for today, but for the future of our children and our communities.”

Charles-Newton also pressed Davis for updates on the release of the Tribal Law and Order Act report (TLOA), another critical document tribal governments need to assess federal operational impacts.

Davis responded that both the Green Book and TLOA report are still under internal review, offering no firm release date but assuring tribes they would receive the documents at the same time as federal staff.

Throughout the meeting, Davis acknowledged systemic issues, including a four-to-five-year backlog in tribal probate cases, understaffed BIA offices, and an aging and often condemned network of tribal detention centers.

Chair Charles-Newton invited Davis to visit the reservation and witness firsthand the challenges facing the Navajo Nation. She emphasized that site visits are essential for federal officials to understand the issues facing tribal citizens and address the underfunded law enforcement services and overstretched judicial systems.

Tribal leaders from the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, Blackfeet Nation, Wind River Reservation, Walker River Paiute Tribe, and Oglala Sioux Tribe also shared pressing concerns that addressed uranium mining in sacred lands, BIA staff turnover, neglected jails, and absent funding for law enforcement emergencies. COLT members underscored the need for the federal government to fulfill its trust and treaty obligations with tangible action, not just dialogue.

Davis reiterated that his office remains open to direct outreach and pledged to push for internal improvements that reflect the needs and voices of tribal nations.

Chair Charles-Newton said the Navajo Nation is committed to ensuring that large land-based tribes are not sidelined in federal policy conversations and supported COLT's advocacy for transparency, equitable funding, and full government-to-government consultation.

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