



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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President Nygren attempts to unlawfully fire the Controller of the Navajo Nation

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council formally recognizes Sean McCabe as the duly confirmed Controller of the Navajo Nation, dismissing a letter issued on Tuesday evening by Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren in which he attempted to unlawfully terminate McCabe from the position.

Council members insist that President Nygren's attempt to terminate Controller McCabe was done in retaliation for the Office of the Controller's role in providing financial documents related to the Office of the President and Vice President's (OPVP) reallocation of funds from missing persons services to cover President Nygren's travel and operational expenses.

This week, Council members were also notified that President Nygren made repeated demands for the Controller to reactivate his purchase card (p-card) to cover his travel expenses. The President's p-card was deactivated by the Office of the Controller at the start of the new fiscal year due to insufficient travel funds.

OPVP then executed a budget revision that defunded missing persons services in the amount of \$229,000, and redirected the funding to be used for President Nygren's travel and operating expenses.

"The President is clearly retaliating against the Controller and violating his fiduciary and legal responsibility to uphold the best interest of the Navajo Nation," said Speaker Crystalyne Curley. "The Council will continue to uphold the lawful confirmation of the Controller."

Speaker Curley also noted Controller McCabe's role in the ongoing investigation into ZenniHome, and stated that the Council will continue to ensure that the investigation continues without political interference from the President.

The Controller also has extensive authority over the reallocation and oversight of ARPA funds, raising concerns from the Council, particularly when there are investigations into alleged misconduct by OPVP involving ARPA funds.

Controller McCabe was unanimously confirmed by the Council on Jan. 24, 2024. In accordance with 12 N.N.C. § 202(B)(2) of Navajo Nation Code, the Controller serves at the pleasure of the Navajo Nation Council.

The President wrongfully claims that he accepted the resignation of the Controller in July, and then reappointed him as the "Interim Controller" thereby making him subject to the President's removal.

In July, the Office of Legislative Counsel determined that President Nygren's acceptance of McCabe's resignation and subsequent appointment of an Acting Controller were made without legal authority and without the concurrence of the Budget and Finance Committee, as required under statutory law.

The Office of the Controller's statutory plan of operation, within 12 N.N.C., specifically states that the "President of the Navajo Nation, with the consent of the Budget and Finance Committee, may appoint an Acting Controller to serve during vacancies of the Controller pending formal action by the Navajo Nation Council."

"Only the Navajo Nation Council holds the authority to accept the resignation of the Controller," stated the Office of Legislative Counsel. "Because the Council did not accept Mr. McCabe's resignation, the President's actions were without legal effect."

Speaker Curley issued a memorandum to McCabe on Wednesday, reaffirming his role as the Controller of the Navajo Nation and stating that President Nygren's termination letter dated October 7, 2025, holds no legal authority or effect.

Controller McCabe is authorized to continue carrying out the duties and responsibilities of the Office of the Controller in accordance with all applicable laws, policies, and procedures to safeguard the Nation's financial integrity and ensure continuity of government operations.

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