



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Law and Order Committee advances Mutual Aid Agreements to strengthen public safety across the Navajo Nation



The Law and Order Committee voted unanimously to advance three Intergovernmental Mutual Aid Agreements.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Tuesday, Nov. 11, the Law and Order Committee (LOC) voted unanimously to advance three Mutual Aid (Intergovernmental) Agreements between the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety (DPS), the Navajo Police Department, and three partnering jurisdictions—Navajo County, Coconino County, and the Hopi Tribe.

The agreements are designed to enhance coordination, communication, and joint enforcement of criminal and traffic laws across the Navajo Nation and neighboring jurisdictions.

LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton (Shiprock) emphasized the importance of the agreements in addressing long-standing public safety concerns voiced by community members.

“Our Diné people have repeatedly called for stronger action to protect their communities,” said Charles-Newton. “Too often, offenders have used jurisdictional gaps to escape accountability. This agreement closes those gaps and gives our Division of Public Safety the tools, partnerships, and legal authority it needs to safeguard every corner of the Nation.”

The Mutual Aid Agreements formalize cooperative law enforcement operations, including the cross-commissioning of peace officers between the Navajo Nation and its partner agencies.

Certified officers will have the authority to conduct searches, make arrests, and enforce the criminal and traffic laws of both the Navajo Nation and the State of Arizona to the full extent allowed by law. These measures are intended to prevent any jurisdiction from becoming a sanctuary for offenders, reduce inter-jurisdictional flight, and ensure consistent and effective enforcement of the law.

Vice Chair Nathan Notah (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl'a'a') expressed his strong support for the measure, calling it a necessary step forward for the Nation's justice system. "This is long overdue," said Notah. "For too long, our law enforcement officers have faced barriers that limited their ability to pursue and detain violent offenders. These agreements represent a unified approach to protecting our people and ensuring no one uses the Navajo Nation as a refuge from justice."

Under the terms of the agreements, the Navajo Nation and its partners will also collaborate on extradition procedures. Requests for extradition will be submitted through proper channels, requiring written documentation and warrants of arrest issued by the requesting jurisdiction. Once arrested, individuals will be brought before a judge to confirm their identity and will have the right to counsel and bail, ensuring due process while maintaining intergovernmental accountability.

The agreements outline specific procedures for cross-commissioning, training standards through the Navajo Peace Officer Standards and Training (Navajo POST) Commission, and shared operational guidelines during emergencies and disasters. Each participating agency retains supervisory control over its officers while working cooperatively during joint operations.

"This is a historic step toward stronger partnerships and a safer future," added Charles-Newton. "By standing together with our neighboring counties and the Hopi Tribe, we reaffirm the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation and our shared commitment to justice and community safety."

The Law and Order Committee voted three in favor and none opposed to approve Legislation No. 0238-25, 0243-25, and 0244-25, incorporating three key amendments to strengthen enforcement language and clarify procedural standards. The legislation will now move forward to the Naabik'íyáti' Committee for final consideration.

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