



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Navajo Nation takes action to formally oppose the SAVE America Act



The 25th Navajo Nation Council passed legislation formally opposing the SAVE Act citing concerns over its impact on Navajo voters.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Thursday, the Naabik'íyáti' Committee unanimously passed legislation to formally establish the Navajo Nation's opposition to H.R. 7296, known as the SAVE Act or SAVE America Act, citing significant concerns over its disproportionate impact on Navajo voters and tribal communities across the country.

H.R. 7296 would require people to provide proof of U.S. citizenship to register to vote and to cast ballots in federal elections through a REAL ID, U.S. passport, military ID, or other forms of ID that often require birth certificates, birthplace or other documents to prove citizenship.

"For many Navajo people, this is not a Democrat or Republican issue. We are thinking about our elders and grandparents, many of whom were not born in hospitals and do not have birth certificates. Under the SAVE Act, they would be required to travel long distances, multiple times, just to register to vote and cast their ballots," said Speaker Crystalyne Curley, who sponsored the legislation.

She noted that many Navajo elders were not born in modern hospital facilities and often lack vital records documents such as birth certificates.

On the Navajo Nation, many voters could be forced to travel more than 100 miles to comply with the proposed new requirements, making multiple trips for registration, primary

elections, and general elections. With current gas prices averaging around \$4 per gallon on the Navajo Nation, the additional trips would present a financial setback, particularly for low income voters.

“We understand this issue is very political in Washington, D.C., but this is not a time for tribes to be quiet, we cannot afford to sit on the sidelines,” Speaker Curley stated.

The resolution also highlights the growing influence of Native American voters in Arizona and New Mexico, noting their decisive impact in recent state and federal elections.

“Navajo voters, along with other tribes, represent a powerful voting bloc. “We have seen how our communities can influence the outcome of federal and state elections, as demonstrated in 2020. We must stand united to protect our right to vote,” she added.

Speaker Curley also emphasized that federal elections carry great importance for tribal nations due to treaty obligations and the federal government’s trust responsibility.

“The outcome of federal elections directly affects our representation, resources, and future as tribal nations. As the First People of this country, we must stand together to protect our fundamental right to vote.”

In addition to opposing the SAVE Act, the Navajo Nation is calling on Congressional leaders to work collaboratively with tribes to strengthen access to voting.

“We are calling on our Congressional leaders to oppose the SAVE Act and instead partner with tribes to expand voting access,” the Committee stated. “We are ready to work with both Republicans and Democrats to find meaningful solutions.”

The legislation further points to existing barriers that already impact Navajo voters, including rural addressing challenges that have led to thousands of rejected ballots in past elections. A majority of voters on tribal lands rely on mail-in voting, an option that could be undermined by the SAVE Act’s provisions.

The Naabik’íyáti’ Committee’s action reaffirms the Navajo Nation’s commitment to protecting voting rights, upholding tribal sovereignty, and ensuring that every eligible voter has a fair and accessible opportunity to participate in all elections.

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