



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Law and Order Committee hosts Many Farms public hearing to strengthen the Navajo Nation criminal code



Law and Order Committee hosted a public hearing on proposed amendments to Title 17 of the Navajo Nation Criminal Code at the Many Farms Chapter.

MANY FARMS, Ariz. — On Monday, the Law and Order Committee (LOC) hosted a public hearing at the Many Farms Chapter, bringing together community members, chapter officials, and public safety leaders to gather public input on proposed amendments to Title 17 of the Navajo Nation Criminal Code.

The hearing is part of a series of public meetings being held throughout the Navajo Nation to collect testimony and recommendations aimed at strengthening public safety laws and modernizing provisions within the criminal code.

“Our communities deserve the opportunity to be heard as we work to strengthen the Navajo Nation Criminal Code,” said LOC Vice Chair Nathan Notah. “The testimony shared by community members, victims’ families, chapter leaders, and public safety personnel provides valuable insight into the challenges our people face every day.”

Before receiving public testimony, Alice Franco of the Indian Health Service Sanitation Facilities Construction Program provided an overview of efforts to expand access to water, wastewater, and sanitation services.

Franco explained that IHS continues to address critical infrastructure deficiencies through waterline extensions, septic system installations, and community sanitation projects.

She noted that many projects face delays due to funding limitations, staffing shortages, environmental reviews, and right-of-way requirements.

Franco highlighted ongoing recruitment efforts to address workforce shortages within the engineering and technical fields.

Navajo Police Deputy Chief Lenoard Williams also addressed concerns related to crime prevention, law enforcement staffing, and community safety initiatives.

Deputy Williams discussed ongoing efforts to combat bootlegging, illegal drug activity, and violent crime through specialized enforcement operations. He reported that staffing shortages remain a significant challenge, with more than 100 vacant positions affecting law enforcement services throughout the Navajo Nation.

Division of Public Safety Director Dr. Delores Greyeyes also discussed challenges related to detention facilities, substance abuse prevention efforts, and the need for continued collaboration among law enforcement agencies, service providers, and local communities. Following the reports, community members and chapter leadership shared testimony on a wide range of public safety concerns affecting families and neighborhoods.

Participants spoke about the impacts of bootlegging, substance abuse, domestic violence, dangerous driving behaviors, feral animal attacks, and repeat criminal offenses. Several speakers emphasized the need for stronger penalties, improved enforcement, and increased resources for victims and their families.

Community member Carmelita Apodaca shared personal experiences involving the loss of loved ones due to alcohol-related incidents and violent crime. Apodaca urged LOC to pursue meaningful reforms that hold offenders accountable while prioritizing victim advocacy and community healing.

Many Farms Chapter President Charlotte Begay also highlighted the importance of prevention efforts, public education, and stronger collaboration between local leadership and public safety agencies.

Her recommendations included expanding community awareness campaigns, strengthening animal control laws, addressing road safety concerns, and improving access to services that support youth and families.

The LOC will continue holding public hearings in communities throughout the Navajo Nation over the coming months. Testimony gathered during these sessions will help shape final recommendations for amendments to Title 17 and related provisions of Navajo law.

Community members are encouraged to participate in the upcoming hearing on June 15 at St. Michael's Chapter and continue sharing their perspectives on public safety, criminal justice, and community well-being.

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