



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER
MEDIA CONTACT:
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 12, 2026

Naabik'iyáti' Committee advances legislation on rights-of-way for energy development agreements



Legislation sponsor and Resources and Development Committee member Council Delegate Rickie Nez.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Thursday, the Naabik'iyáti' Committee voted to advance legislation authorizing the Resources and Development Committee (RDC) to approve amendments to rights-of-way previously approved under Resolution No. CF-08-11, ratify prior rights-of-way resolutions involving energy development agreements, and approve future rights-of-way associated with such agreements.

Legislation sponsor and Resources and Development Committee member Council Delegate Rickie Nez said the measure is the result of extensive review and coordination among the Division of Natural Resources, Navajo Nation Minerals Department, Department of Justice, Office of Legislative Counsel, and leadership from Arizona Public Service and Navajo Transitional Energy Company.

“RDC has been in discussions for three years, meeting with NTEC and APS leadership to determine how rights-of-way could be renewed to allow continued operations at the Four Corners Power Plant,” Delegate Nez said. “Certain provisions in the Navajo Nation Energy Policy related to energy agreements and development activities required clarification.”

Delegate Nez added that the Department of Justice and Office of Legislative Counsel have also collaborated on separate legislations for energy development agreements that require RDC's authority under Navajo Nation law to approve rights-of-way.

Legislation No. 0105-26 would amend Resolution No. CF-08-11, which approved a right-of-way and lease for the Four Corners Power Plant, including transmission infrastructure that crosses Navajo

Nation communities. The legislation also addresses provisions related to RDC's authority over rights-of-way and its role in recommending approval of energy development agreements, authorities established under Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty questioned the legislation's lack of a specific definition for energy development agreements, expressing concern that the validity of certain rights-of-way resolutions could be challenged without additional clarification.

Delegate Nez explained that when Resolution No. CF-08-11 was approved in 2011, the Navajo Nation Council considered both energy and mineral agreements to fall within the scope of energy development agreements. He added that the resolution also delegated final approval authority for rights-of-way to the Resources and Development Committee.

Resources and Development Committee Chair Brenda Jesus said the committee has worked to ensure the legislation aligns with existing Navajo Nation laws while clarifying the intent of energy development agreements. She noted that the measure is intended to support the renewal of rights-of-way associated with energy infrastructure that generates revenue for the Navajo Nation and compensation for individual Indian landowners whose allotments are crossed by transmission lines.

"The RDC has been centric to adhering to existing laws enacted by the Council. We are trying to renew the rights-of-way in hopes of continuing revenue flow back to the Navajo Nation from these energy companies. Delegates who represent communities with kilovolt transmission lines running through them are tasked with informing their constituents about these matters. This is an enumerated power that has been given to RDC," Chair Jesus said.

The Naabik'íyáti' Committee voted 14 in favor and six opposed to advance Legislation No. 0105-26 to the Navajo Nation Council for consideration.

###