



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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25th Navajo Nation Council votes against confirmation of JoAnn Jayne as attorney general and directs her immediate removal



Law and Order Committee Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton sponsored a legislation which directs the immediate removal of JoAnn Jayne as attorney general following the Council's vote against confirming her appointment.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Wednesday, the 25th Navajo Nation Council voted against confirming JoAnn Jayne as Navajo Nation attorney general and directed her immediate removal from the Office of the Attorney General, citing the Council's appointment and approval authority under the Navajo Nation Code.

"The law is clear. When the previous attorney general vacated the office, immediate removal was not a matter of asking permission. They understood the law and did not challenge it," said legislation sponsor and Law and Order Committee Chairwoman Eugenia Charles-Newton.

"The purpose of this legislation is to uphold the law and ensure the appointment process established by the Navajo Nation Code is followed. No delegate stepped forward to sponsor legislation to confirm Jayne's appointment, so I chose to sponsor it. That legislation failed, and the Council's authority must be respected."

Legislation No. 0230-26 declines to appoint and approve Jayne as attorney general, reaffirming that a presidential recommendation does not independently authorize an individual to serve in either position. The Council also rejects Jayne serving as attorney general in a permanent, acting or interim capacity.

The Council's approval of Legislation No. 0230-26 followed its vote on Legislation No. 0228-26, which sought to confirm Jayne's appointment as attorney general. The Council voted against confirming Jayne with a vote of eight in favor and 11 opposed.

Under 2 N.N.C. § 1962(B), the Attorney General and Deputy Attorney General must be licensed attorneys appointed by the Navajo Nation Council upon the President's recommendation. Appointments become effective upon Council approval, and both positions serve at the pleasure of the Council.

President Buu Nygren recommended Jayne for Deputy Attorney General on Dec. 9, 2025. She subsequently served as acting deputy attorney general without Council appointment and approval. On Aug. 27, 2026, the Council certified Resolution No. CAU-49-26, declining to appoint and approve Jayne as Deputy Attorney General and directing her removal from that office. Four days later, President Nygren recommended Jayne for attorney general, a separate position subject to the same appointment and approval requirements.

Under Legislation No. 0230-26, Jayne must immediately cease representing herself as attorney general, stop exercising the authority of that office, vacate the office and surrender government property, credentials, records, files and other materials held in connection with her purported service.

The legislation directs Navajo Nation government departments, divisions, programs, chapters and entities not to recognize Jayne as attorney general or rely on counsel, opinions, directions or actions she subsequently issues while purporting to exercise the office's authority.

The Navajo Nation Department of Justice and Department of Personnel Management are directed to complete the personnel actions necessary to terminate Jayne's employment with the Department of Justice, including the cessation of salary and employee benefits in accordance with applicable Navajo Nation law and personnel policies.

The legislation does not automatically invalidate prior actions taken by the Office of the Attorney General. Any challenge to a specific prior action must be evaluated under applicable Navajo Nation law.

The Council voted 11 in favor and seven opposed to approve Legislation No. 0230-26. The resolution takes effect upon certification by the Speaker of the 25th Navajo Nation Council.

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