THE NAVAJO NATION
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION

LEGISLATION NO: 0272-26 **SPONSOR: Carl R. Slater**

TITLE: **An Action Relating to the Naabik'íyáti' Committee; Opposing the Application of the Attorney General's Memorandum Implementing Executive Order 14224 to Diné Bizaad and Other Native American Languages; and Approving the Navajo Nation's Comments on the Memorandum**

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LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET
Tracking No. 0272-26

DATE: November 13, 2026

TITLE OF RESOLUTION: AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; OPPOSING THE APPLICATION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S MEMORANDUM IMPLEMENTING EXECUTIVE ORDER 14224 TO DINÉ BIZAAD AND OTHER NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES; AND APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATION'S COMMENTS ON THE MEMORANDUM

PURPOSE: This legislation, if approved, would oppose the application of the Attorney General's memorandum implementing Executive Order 14224 to Diné Bizaad and other Native American languages, approve the Navajo Nation's comments on the memorandum, and authorize their submission to the Attorney General.

FINAL AUTHORITY: Naabik'íyáti' Committee

VOTE REQUIRED: Simple Majority Vote

This written summary does not address amendments as may be proposed before the Budget and Finance Committee. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each Council Delegate to review each proposed resolution in detail.

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD: Minutes
Website Posting Time/Date:
Posting End Date: 11/18/26
Eligible for Action: 11/19/26

PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

25th NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL—Fourth Year, 2026

Introduced by:

Primary Sponsor

Tracking No. 0272-26

AN ACTION

RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; OPPOSING THE APPLICATION OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S MEMORANDUM IMPLEMENTING EXECUTIVE ORDER 14224 TO DINÉ BIZAAD AND OTHER NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES; AND APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATION'S COMMENTS ON THE MEMORANDUM

WHEREAS:

A. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee is a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council empowered to coordinate with all committees the appearance and testimony of the Navajo Nation before federal, state and other non-Navajo government entities, and to review and continually monitor the programs and activities of federal departments through the intergovernmental relationships between the Navajo Nation and those departments. 2 N.N.C. §§ 700(A), 701(A)(7) and 701(A)(8).

B. Through Resolution CD-52-24, the Navajo Nation Council designated Diné Bizaad as the official language of the Navajo Nation and placed on the Navajo Nation government an affirmative obligation to preserve and enhance the role of Diné Bizaad as the official language, including by encouraging greater opportunities for individuals to learn it. 1 N.N.C. §§ 401 and 402. The President of the Navajo Nation signed Resolution CD-52-24 into law on December 24, 2024.

C. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 161,174 people in the United States spoke Navajo at home in 2017 through 2021, about 47 percent of all speakers of Native North American languages, and many Navajo elders rely on Navajo interpretation to understand federal health, benefits, emergency and legal information.

D. During World War II, the Navajo Code Talkers used Diné Bizaad to build a code that the enemy never broke.

E. In the Native American Languages Act, Congress declared that it is the policy of the United States to preserve, protect and promote the rights and freedom of Native Americans to use, practice and develop Native American languages, and to fully recognize the inherent right of Indian tribes to take action on, and give official status to, their Native American languages for the purpose of conducting their own business; provided that the right of Native Americans to express themselves through the use of Native American languages shall not be restricted in any public proceeding; and directed the President to have federal departments and agencies evaluate their policies and procedures in consultation with Indian tribes. 25 U.S.C. §§ 2903(1), 2903(6), 2904 and 2905(a).

F. On March 1, 2025, the President signed Executive Order 14224, Designating English as the Official Language of the United States, 90 Fed. Reg. 11,363 (Mar. 6, 2025), which states that nothing in the order requires or directs any change in the services provided by any agency. Exec. Order No. 14224, § 3(b).

G. On November 12, 2026, the United States Department of Justice published, and requested public comment on, the Attorney General's memorandum to federal agencies implementing Executive Order 14224, titled "Guidance on Implementing English as the Official Language," which was issued on September 1, 2026 and revised on October 22, 2026 ("Memorandum"), 91 Fed. Reg. 72,923, Docket No. OLP188, with comments due January 11, 2027. The Federal Register notice is attached as **Exhibit A**.

H. The Memorandum adopts an English-only default for federal agencies, with exceptions where another language is required by law or necessary to accomplish an agency's mission, calls for a disclaimer that English is the official language and the

authoritative version of all federal information, encourages agencies to consider machine translation, and states that the Department encourages other agencies to identify and remove non-English languages from their services, but it does not mention Native American languages, Indian tribes, the Native American Languages Act, treaties or the federal trust responsibility.

I. Native American languages are not foreign languages, and federal programs that serve the Navajo people, including health care, benefits, emergency management, census and survey work, courts and services to victims of crime, depend on Navajo interpretation and translation to reach the people they serve.

J. The Navajo Nation has developed written comments on the Memorandum, which (i) take no position on the use of English in federal business generally; (ii) ask the Department to state in the Memorandum that it does not apply to Native American languages and that the Native American Languages Act is a federal statute within its exception for languages required by law; (iii) ask that qualified human interpreters and translators be used for Native American languages wherever health, safety or legal rights are involved; and (iv) request government-to-government consultation, attached as **Exhibit B**.

K. It is in the best interest of the Navajo Nation to oppose the application of the Memorandum to Diné Bizaad and other Native American languages, to approve and adopt the comments within **Exhibit B**, and to authorize their submission to the Attorney General of the United States for inclusion in the record of Docket No. OLP188.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

A. The Navajo Nation hereby opposes the application of the Memorandum to Diné Bizaad and other Native American languages, approves and adopts the comments of the Navajo Nation on the Memorandum, attached as **Exhibit B**, and authorizes the submission of those comments to the Attorney General of the United States for inclusion in the record of Docket No. OLP188 on or before January 11, 2027.

B. The Navajo Nation calls on the Department of Justice to state in the Memorandum that it does not apply to Native American languages, as defined in 25 U.S.C. § 2902(6), and that agencies may continue to provide interpretation and translation in Native American languages in programs and services for Native Americans.

C. The Navajo Nation requests government-to-government consultation before the Memorandum is finalized and calls on federal agencies to complete the evaluations required by 25 U.S.C. § 2905(a), in consultation with Tribes, before reducing any service provided in a Native American language.

D. The Navajo Nation hereby authorizes the Navajo Nation President, the Navajo Nation Vice-President, the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council, and their designees to take all steps necessary to advocate for the Navajo Nation's position with respect to this resolution.