

Navajo Nation Council approves ethics violation bill

Written by Staff Report
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WINDOW ROCK – During a Navajo Nation Council Special Session on Tuesday, members unanimously approved Legislation No. 0063-15, which will amend Title II provisions in the Ethics in Navajo Government Law and the Navajo Nation Election Code, if signed into law.

According to the legislation, it states that candidates who run for “public elective offices should not have any outstanding ethics judgments, including orders for restitution to the Navajo Nation pursuant to the Navajo Ethics in Government Law,” and ensure that candidates running for office do not have any outstanding ethics violations before serving in an elected office.

If elected officials are in violation of the Ethics in Government Law, the penalties will include disqualification from an election, while current tribal officials would face the possibility of removal. Other penalties may include administrative fines, civil damages, orders of restitution, criminal punishment, and ineligibility to run for a public office for a period of five years.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) said there is approximately \$673,000 owed to the Navajo Nation by employees and elected officials who misappropriated Navajo funds, dating back to 1997.