

Written by gallupsun
Monday, 13 November 2023 10:05

COYOTE CANYON, N.M. — The spirit of teamwork helped to appropriate \$2.1 million to help reestablish services for disabled persons provided by the Coyote Canyon Rehabilitation Center, as members of the 25th Navajo Nation Council joined Navajo Nation President Dr. Buu Nygren in signing Resolution CO-82-23 into law Nov. 3.

Legislation No. 0232-23 was sponsored by Council Delegate Nathan Notah (Coyote Canyon, Mexican Springs, Naschitti, Tohatchi, Bahastl'a'a') and gained unanimous support from the Council during the Fall Council Session in October, where it was approved with 17 in favor and zero opposed.

"Providing these services locally is important to our community," Notah said. "We don't want our members to have to go to Albuquerque, Santa Fe, or Phoenix. We want to keep them here on our land. This is a blessing for our elders and others who rely on these critical services."

At the signing, legislation co-sponsor, Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Lake Valley, Nahodishgish, Standing Rock, Whiterock, Huerfano, Nageezi, Crownpoint) said that he and Notah were initially approached by the CCRC staff and asked to create legislation that would return these services to the community.

He thanked the staff for their persistence in following up and ensuring the legislation made it onto the Fall Council Session agenda.

"It took a lot of work to get this appropriation," he said. "The staff pushed us and asked about the legislation status. I'd like to commend Delegate Seth Damon for pushing to get the legislation passed during the council session. This was a team effort. When we work as a team from the Council to the President's Office, we can do a lot."

The \$2.1 million allocated from the Síhasin Fund for the CCRC will go toward constructing a new modular building, utility upgrades, and a new parking lot.

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The CCRC operates under a Memorandum of Agreement with the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services to provide patient care and rehabilitation services for disabled people – many of whom are elderly Navajo people.

In May, the existing facility was condemned and closed by the Navajo Nation Occupational Safety and Health Administration due to health and safety hazards caused by lead paint, asbestos containing material, and the presence of mold. The unexpected closure caused a severe disruption to operations and services provided to their clients.

CCRC Interim Executive Director Yvette Sandoval thanked the leadership for recognizing the need for services for disabled individuals in the community.

“Thank you for approving this funding so that we can come back home,” she said.

Speaker Crystalyne Curley (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain), who also co-sponsored the legislation, noted that the support to reestablish the center’s services was unanimous during the Fall Council Session and thanked both the 25th Navajo Nation Council and Nygren.

“Thank you, President, for signing this important legislation into law,” she said. “Thanks to the staff who have made this organization a continued success. We need more facilities like this across the Navajo Nation.”

Nygren said that he looks forward to seeing the \$2.1 million allocation put into action and the reopening of the CCRC.

“Facilities like this contribute to healthier communities. Our relatives who are having difficult times need this help to be provided locally,” Nygren said. “It’s important that these services are delivered to our people because it empowers our communities.”

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The President thanked the 17 delegates who voted unanimously to support the legislation and said that the Council, the President's Office, and the chapters need to continue to work together as one.

