

## **NN dismisses Becenti-Aguilar grievance**

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 15 July 2016 00:46

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### **10-day appeal contemplated**

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. - The Navajo Nation Office of Hearings and Appeals has dismissed a grievance filed by a challenger to the council delegate seat vacated by Mel Begay.

Theresa Becenti-Aguilar, who was one of 13 candidates to run for the vacancy, filed the grievance July 5. The election to fill the remaining year-and-a-half of Begay's seat was June 28 and was won by Steven Begay of Naschitti.

Joe Aguirre, a hearing officer with the Office of Hearings and Appeals, responded to Becenti-Aguilar's written claim on July 6. Aguirre wrote that the matter is "dismissed for lack of sufficiency." The document suggests the dismissal was with prejudice.

"... petitioner's complaint is facially inadequate as it fails to name the position Steven Begay holds as a permanent employee of an agency of the United States or any state," the response reads. The document states that Becenti-Aguilar has 10 days to file an appeal.

Becenti-Aguilar's claim stated that Begay violated a code that no one "... be in the permanent

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employment of the United States or any state or subdivision thereof, or be an elected official of the United States or any state or subdivision thereof, with the exception of service to a school board or elective county office.”

Becenti-Aguilar also stated in the complaint that, “Candidates elected, who are employed by the Navajo Nation, must resign from such employment before taking the oath of office and shall not be employed by the Navajo Nation during their term of office.”

Becenti-Aguilar said Begay is an employee of the Gallup Indian Medical Center. She said that represents a clear code violation.

“I believe something is wrong here,” Becenti-Aguilar said, adding that she’d reserve comment on a next move until she confers with her legal representative.

***By Bernie Dotson  
Sun Correspondent***