

Council votes to change the Navajo Nation's 2024 primary election date

Written by gallupsun
Friday, 15 March 2024 09:16

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — The 25th Navajo Nation Council held a special session on March 8 and approved an emergency legislation changing the Navajo Nation Primary Election date to July 30. The change will only apply to the 2024 primary election and will not carry over to the next year.

According to Navajo Election Code, the Navajo Nation's primary elections are held the first Tuesday in August for any year in which a general election is held and at which candidates for public office are to be elected.

On Feb. 8, Arizona Gov. Katie Hobbs signed into law House Bill 2785, changing Arizona's 2024 primary election date to July 30, which will only apply for this year's primary election.

"This issue was brought before the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors who discussed what impacts the date change would have on the Navajo primary election," legislation sponsor Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill) said.

The Election Board stated that having two major elections conducted one week apart would impact the Navajo voter turnout and dilute the Navajo vote.

Coconino County Supervisor Lena Fowler attended the special session to support the change of date for the Navajo primary election.

"If there are two election dates, the Navajo Nation won't get the voter turnout for chapter positions, school board positions, and other important elected positions. It would create confusion," Fowler stated.

She added that by keeping the date of the Navajo Nation primary election in sync with the state of Arizona's primary election, Navajo voters will go to the polls as they always have, voting in both state and chapter elections simultaneously.

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"If President signs, then this date change will certainly require us all to educate our communities. But the goal is certainly to have our nation prepared, and for a comprehensive voter turnout," Nez said.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council voted eight in favor and six opposed, approving Legislation No. 0047-24. The resolution awaits consideration from the Navajo Nation President.

