

**LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY SHEET**

Tracking No. 0176-18

**DATE:** May 17, 2018

**TITLE OF RESOLUTION:** AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; RECOMMENDING ACTION TO THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT'S LEGAL COUNSEL

**PURPOSE:** This legislation recommends the Navajo Nation President and Navajo Nation Vice President take appropriate action regarding Karis Begaye's incident involving a vehicle collision while reportedly under the influence of alcohol.

**This written summary does not address recommended amendments as may be provided by the standing committee. The Office of Legislative Counsel requests each committee member to review the proposed resolution in detail.**

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD: None

Website Posting Time/Date: 3:38pm 5/17/18

Posting End Date: 5/22/2018

Eligible for Action: 5/23/2018

PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION  
23<sup>rd</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL – Fourth Year, 2018

INTRODUCED BY



(Prime Sponsor)

TRACKING NO. 0176-18

AN ACTION

RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; RECOMMENDING ACTION  
TO THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT REGARDING THE OFFICE OF  
PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT'S LEGAL COUNSEL

BE IT ENACTED:

WHEREAS

- A. The Navajo Nation established the Naabik'iyáti' Committee as a Navajo Nation Council standing committee and has the authority to oversee the conduct and operations of entities of the Navajo Nation not otherwise under the oversight authority of other standing committees, except that such oversight shall not interfere with the prerogative or business decisions of management governing boards. 2 N.N.C. §§ 164 (A)(9), 700 (A) and 701 (A)(2) (2012).
- B. Karis N. Begaye is officially listed as Legal Counsel in the Office of the President and Vice President.
- C. Karis N. Begaye is a political at-will employee serving at the pleasure of the President and Vice President.
- D. Several reports surfaced regarding an April 22, 2018 vehicle collision south of Flagstaff, Arizona involving Karis N. Begaye driving under the influence of alcohol and severe damage to an assigned tribal vehicle.

- 1 E. On May 4, 2018 the Office of the President and Vice President issued a statement  
2 from Karis N. Begaye in which she apologized for “being involved in an incident that  
3 has brought embarrassment to this Administration and to my family and friends.”
- 4 F. Vice President Jonathan Nez issued a statement regarding Karis N. Begaye saying  
5 “On Monday, May 7, 2018 Karis Begaye, legal counsel to the Navajo Nation  
6 President and Vice President, was placed on administrative leave indefinitely.  
7 Begaye has entered rehabilitative services.”
- 8 G. After May 7, 2018 no other action has been taken by the Office of the President and  
9 Vice President.
- 10 H. The Diné Traditional Law declares and teaches that: It is the right and freedom of the  
11 Diné to choose leaders of their choice; leaders who will communicate with the people  
12 for guidance; leaders who will use their experience and wisdom to always act in the  
13 best interest of the people; and leaders who will also ensure the rights and freedoms  
14 of the generations yet to come. 1 N.N.C. § 203(A)
- 15 I. The Diné Traditional Law declares and teaches that: All leaders chosen by the Diné  
16 are to carry out their duties and responsibilities in a moral and legal manner in  
17 representing the people and the government; the people's trust and confidence in the  
18 leaders and the continued status as a leader are dependent upon adherence to the  
19 values and principles of Diné bi beenahazaanii. 1 N.N.C. § 203(B)
- 20 J. On April 22, 2018 the Legal Counsel to the President and Vice President, who is also  
21 the daughter to the President, was involved in a serious vehicle collision while driving  
22 a Navajo Nation vehicle and no disciplinary action has been taken by the Office of  
23 the President and Vice President.
- 24 K. The Navajo Nation President and Vice President have not communicated with the  
25 People on this matter and they are not acting in the best interest of the People in  
26 carrying out their duties and responsibilities in a moral and legal manner.
- 27 L. The Navajo People’s trust and confidence in the Executive Branch leadership is  
28 fading due to the President’s failure to adhere to the values and principles of Diné bi  
29 beenahazaanii.
- 30

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30


**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**

- A. The Navajo Nation Council urges the Navajo Nation President to personally address the issue involving his daughter and his Legal Counsel immediately.
- B. The Navajo Nation Council strongly recommends the Navajo Nation President take appropriate measures, referring to the Navajo Nation Personnel Policy Manual and the Motor Vehicle Use Policy as when applied to all employees of the Navajo Nation government, for the action of driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, severe damage to tribal property and other violations of Navajo Nation law and policy.



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Hon. Otto Tso  
23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council

**FROM:**   
Levon B. Henry, Chief Legislative Counsel  
Office of Legislative Counsel

**DATE:** May 17, 2018

**SUBJECT:** AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE;  
RECOMMENDING ACTION TO THE PRESIDENT AND VICE  
PRESIDENT REGARDING THE OFFICE OF PRESIDENT AND VICE  
PRESIDENT'S LEGAL COUNSEL

Pursuant to your request, attached is the above-referenced proposed resolution and associated legislative summary sheet. Based on existing law, the resolution as drafted is legally sufficient. However, as with all legislation, it is subject to review by the courts in the event of a challenge. NOTE: This legislation requires a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote at Council.

The Office of Legislative Council confirms the appropriate standing committee review based on the standing committee's powers outlined in 2 N.N.C. §§ 164 and 700. Nevertheless, "the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council shall introduce [the proposed resolution] into the legislative process by assigning it to the respective oversight committee(s) of the Navajo Nation Council having authority over the matters for proper consideration." 2 N.N.C. § 164(A)(5).

Please review the proposed resolution to ensure it is drafted to your satisfaction. If this proposed resolution is acceptable to you, please sign it where it indicates "Prime Sponsor", and submit it to the Office of Legislative Services for the assignment of a tracking number and referral to the Speaker.

If the proposed resolution is unacceptable to you, or if you have further questions, please contact me at the Office of Legislative Counsel and advise me of changes you would like made to the proposed resolution. You may contact me at (928) 871-7166. Thank you.

THE NAVAJO NATION  
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH  
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: \_0176-18\_\_\_\_\_      SPONSOR: Otto Tso

**TITLE: An Action Relating to the Naabik'iyati' Committee; Recommending action to the President and Vice President regarding the Office of President and Vice President's Legal Counsel**

*Date posted: May 17, 2018 at 3:38pm*

Digital comments may be e-mailed to [comments@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:comments@navajo-nsn.gov)

Written comments may be mailed to:

Executive Director  
Office of Legislative Services  
P.O. Box 3390  
Window Rock, AZ 86515  
(928) 871-7590

**Comments may be made in the form of chapter resolutions, letters, position papers, etc. Please include your name, position title, address for written comments; a valid e-mail address is required. Anonymous comments will not be included in the Legislation packet.**

**Please note:** This digital copy is being provided for the benefit of the Navajo Nation chapters and public use. Any political use is prohibited. All written comments received become the property of the Navajo Nation and will be forwarded to the assigned Navajo Nation Council standing committee(s) and/or the Navajo Nation Council for review. Any tampering with public records are punishable by Navajo Nation law pursuant to 17 N.N.C. §374 *et. seq.*



**THE NAVAJO NATION  
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH  
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW SUMMARY**

**LEGISLATION NO.:** 0176-18

**SPONSOR:** Honorable Otto Tso

**TITLE:** An Action Relating To the Naabik'iyati' Committee; Recommending action to the President and Vice President regarding the Office of President and Vice President's Legal Counsel

**Posted:** May 17, 2018 at 3:38PM

**5 DAY Comment Period Ended:** May 22, 2018

**Digital Comments received:**

<b>Comments Supporting</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timm Lewis, Teesto Chapter</li> <li>2. Evelyn Roanhorse</li> <li>3. Merlinda miles, Sr. Management Analysis</li> <li>4. Tina Tsosie</li> <li>5. Cynthia Todachine</li> </ol>
<b>Comments Opposing</b>	<i>None</i>
<b>Inconclusive Comments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ervin Chaves, Nageezi Chapter President</li> <li>2. Email address <u><a href="mailto:cjbenallycsu@gmail.com">cjbenallycsu@gmail.com</a></u></li> <li>3. Daniel Murphy</li> <li>4. Desiree Barney, Kinlichee Chapter</li> </ol>

  
**Legislative Assistant**  
**Office of Legislative Services**

5.23.18 @ 8:35am  
**Date/Time**

# Legislation 0176-18

Timm Lewis <rezboytimm@yahoo.com>

Sun 5/20/2018 3:33 PM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

Dear Honorable Navajo Nation Delegates,

My Family and I fully support this legislation, 0176-18. We think that Justice needs to be served. It is not right that Karis Begaye is allowed back on the road with a slap on the wrist. She was involved in a Drunken driving crash near Flagstaff, AZ. She was involved in a car crash with a truck while drinking and driving. The Navajo Nation Executive Office wants to play this off as minor incident because there were no charges involved, but all facts prove this was a Drinking and Driving incident! Ms. Karis Begaye also was involved in damaging and totaling a Navajo Nation vehicle. Later on, she was given another Navajo Nation Vehicle to drive. If this was any other NN employee, they would have been terminated. As a voting member of the Nation Nation, We ask that Ms. Karis Begaye be fully accountable and held to the fullest extent of the Law of the State of Arizona and the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies, and be terminated!!!! If we do not enforce these laws, than what is that telling all younger generations. We are giving them the messages that it is okay to drink and drive, and it's okay as long as we are related to the Navajo Nation Executive Office or who you know in the NN Government!!!! This is not right, and we should not send this message out!!!! As Elected Officials of the Navajo People, I hope you vote and conclude that Drinking and Driving is not acceptable and tolerated, even at the highest level. Please enforce Justice and vote that Ms. Karis Begaye be terminated from her position withing the Navajo Nation as the Legal Attorney & Adviser to her Father, the Navajo Nation President of the Navajo Nation.

- Timm Lewis, AKA Timothy Lewis  
Voting Member of the Navajo Nation of Teesto Chapter.



5/21/2018

Regarding Legislation # 0176-18 , sponsored by Otto Tso - comments

## Regarding Legislation # 0176-18 , sponsored by Otto Tso

evelyn roanhorse <nanasbah@gmail.com>

Mon 5/21/2018 7:27 AM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

My name is Evelyn Roanhorse, registered voter from Nahata Dzill Chapter, email address is [nanasbah@gmail.com](mailto:nanasbah@gmail.com). Home address is

Thank you to Otto Tso for being brave and ethical in addressing issues that face the Dine Nation, and in this case, I support the removal of the President & Vice Presidents Legal Counsel. Thank You.

--  
Evelyn Roanhorse

# COMMENTS-Karis Begay Incident

Merlinda Miles <MMiles@ndwd.org>

Mon 5/21/2018 2:09 PM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

**As a voter and member of the Dine Nation, I want to recommend that the NTC Naabik'iyati Committee pursue the issue of pressuring President Begaye and the Vice President Jonathan Nez to initiate disciplinary action against Karis Begaye by removing her from her position immediately.**

**These are some concerns:**

- 1. The Navajo Nation President and Vice President are accountable to the Navajo People and the President's Office. President Begaye has failed to address the Karis Begaye incident directly to the Navajo people and has failed to initiate an action that would restore some integrity to his Office and bring some trust back to the Navajo people. The silence from the President and Vice President is very loud.**
- 2. The Navajo Nation President and Vice President are not above the Law. This includes those that work with them in their Office. This must be made clear by the Naabik'tyati Committee to President Begaye and to those that are seeking the presidential nomination. The Committee must set a strong precedence by using this incident.**
- 3. Karis Begaye made a public apology however it was a partial one because she blamed the "alcoholism problem on the reservation" as a justification why everyone is included in that scenario. I am not part of that scenario because I made a good choice not to be. Everyone has a choice to make when it comes to abusing alcohol or doing the right thing to avoid it. Karis Begay made the wrong choice and in the process, has compromised the integrity and the ethics of the Office she holds and the Navajo people.**
- 4. The Navajo President is accountable for all monies and tribal property because these belong to the Navajo people. The cost of the vehicle that was demolished by Karis Begay should be replenished from the President's budget.**

**I would like to have the Naabik'iyati Committee take our comments seriously and make the right decision to address this matter pertaining to President Begaye and his daughter, Karis Begaye.**

Merlinda Miles, Sr. Management Analyst

[@yahoo.com](mailto:MMiles@ndwd.org)

[mmiles@ndwd.org](mailto:mmiles@ndwd.org) (business)

# Fw: 0176-18

TINA <tsosietina@yahoo.com>

Mon 5/21/2018 5:43 PM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

----- Forwarded Message -----

**From:** "TINA" <tsosietina@yahoo.com>

**To:** "comments@navajo-nsn.com" <comments@navajo-nsn.com>

**Cc:**

**Sent:** Mon, May 21, 2018 at 5:18 PM

**Subject:** 0176-18

I fully support the removal of Ms. Begay. No administrative leave. The Navajo nation vehicle insurance will be raised costing the nation thousands maybe six figures. What makes matters worse Ms. Begaye was caught on video drink with vodka falling out of the tribal vehicle. If it weren't for those men students she would have returned to her vehicle, they kept her safe. How much humiliation will the Navajo Nation go thru, my cousin in Germany asked me about this. She did not learn her lesson after her accident as she was seen at Twin Arrows drinking again. That is the worse kind of alcoholic, one with no remorse or care for their life. The nation needs to put a foot down and say this is not OK.

Tina Tsosie

Mother of 2

Po box .

Rehoboth, nm 87322

@yahoo.com

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

5/22/2018

Fire Karis Begaye - comments

# Fire Karis Begaye

cjbenallycsu <cjbenallycsu@gmail.com>

Tue 5/22/2018 6:24 AM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

Karis Begaye should be fired for the damages she's caused the Navajo people; She along with father. It is appalling that she and the president continue to draw our money. They are in denial and lack an integrity. They have no respect for the people. Enforce fundamental law, enforce laws on dui, lies, trief, property damage, abuse of position and power, nepotism, etc

Sent via the Samsung Galaxy S8, an AT&T 4G LTE smartphone

## Cynthia Todachine

---

To: comments@navajo-nsn.gov  
Cc: Cynthia Todachine  
Subject: Personal comments of Karis Begaye accident as reported

All tribal employees are subject to follow the policies / procedures / laws of the Navajo Nation, no one is an exception. Although an at-will employee, these same standards shall apply. The 'accident', not the incident, occurred while Ms. Karis drove while under the influence of alcohol. Evidence displayed in the vehicle were alcoholic beverages, how can this be denied. The vehicle driven was a Tribal vehicle. Was the travel tribal related, no mention of this. What was the Travel Authorization indication. Approximate time of the accident plays a factor. The gross amount of damage to the Tribal vehicle, totaled, is an indicator of total neglect on Ms. Karis behalf. Mr. President you are fortunate to have your daughter alive. Face the real facts, both of you and come clean to the people. Fest-up and take the right approach to handling. Who will pay for the vehicle, it's totaled. Ms. Karis you going to step to the plate and be responsible. The appropriate action is to terminate Ms. Karis employment and no allowance for re-employment with the Navajo Nation.

I sent this e-mail  
uncertain if received @ your level.

These are my personal comments of the  
incident - I ~~speck~~ speak @ a very  
personal level

This should not hinder @ my work level,  
I am a citizen of the Navajo Nation.

Full name is: Cynthia Todachine  
Address: P.O. Box  
Window Rock Az, 86515  
email: ctodachine@navajo dot. org

0176-18

Daniel Murphy <DanielMurphy@sandersusd.net>

Tue 5/22/2018 2:40 PM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

Navajo Nation Employees , rather political appointees or not, need to go by the same rules, regulations, policies. Rank / Authority need not have privileges when it involves serious incidents. All work for the people / our Dine of our great Nation.

Daniel Murphy-



5/22/2018

Legislation 176-18 - comments

# Legislation 176-18

Desiree <desireeirmaine@gmail.com>

Tue 5/22/2018 2:40 PM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

She needs to be fired

Desiree Barney  
Kinlichee chapter

# Fwd: Legislation 0176-18

CenturyLink Customer <echvz11@q.com>

Fri 5/18/2018 9:37 AM

To: comments <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>;

---

**From:** "ERVIN CHAVEZ" <echvz11@q.com>  
**To:** "comments" <comments@navajo-nsn.gov>  
**Sent:** Friday, May 18, 2018 8:35:32 AM  
**Subject:** Legislation 0176-18

This legislation just "recommends an action by OPVP" on the DWI of Karis Begaye, Legal Counsel for OPVP. It should read that the legislation "demands termination of Karis Begaye. What makes this issue more troublesome is why was this individual even allowed a driving permit with previous DWIs on her record. There are a lot of ex-tribal employees who were fired/terminated due to damages to tribal property and DWIs. What make this person any different then other Navajo people except that she is the President's daughter. These kinds of examples begs the bigger questions, should there be background checks of all tribal employees including elected officials. There should have been immediate actions taken by tribal officials and departments to correct this issue of Karis Begaye yet she was given another tribal vehicle and driving again. I submit this comment as a Chapter President of Nageezi Chapter.

Ervin Chavez, Nageezi Chapter President