

**MINUTES
of the
FIFTH MEETING
of the
INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**October 4, 2017
Joint Meeting with the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee
Standing Rock Chapter House
Crownpoint**

**October 5, 2017
Ojo Encino Chapter House
Ojo Encino**

**October 6, 2017
Sandia Resort and Casino
Pueblo of Sandia**

The fifth meeting for the 2017 interim of the Indian Affairs Committee (IAC) was called to order on October 4, 2017 at 10:15 a.m. by Senator John Pinto, co-chair, at the Standing Rock Chapter House in Crownpoint.

Present

Rep. Georgene Louis, Co-Chair (10/6)
Sen. John Pinto, Co-Chair
Rep. Sharon Clahchischilliage
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson
Rep. Derrick J. Lente (10/5, 10/6)
Sen. Richard C. Martinez (10/5, 10/6)
Rep. Debbie A. Rodella (10/5, 10/6)
Sen. Nancy Rodriguez
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. Benny Shendo, Jr.
Sen. William P. Soules

Absent

Rep. Zachary J. Cook
Sen. Mark Moores
Sen. Cliff R. Pirtle
Rep. Nick L. Salazar
Rep. James E. Smith

Advisory Members

Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon
Sen. Carlos R. Cisneros (10/5, 10/6)
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom (10/6)
Sen. Cisco McSorley
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero (10/6)
Rep. Angelica Rubio
Sen. Clemente Sanchez (10/6)
Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson (10/4, 10/5)

Rep. Harry Garcia
Rep. Stephanie Garcia Richard
Sen. Stuart Ingle
Rep. Sarah Maestas Barnes
Sen. George K. Munoz
Rep. Patricio Ruiloba
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana

(Attendance dates are noted for members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Peter Kovnat, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)

Diego Jimenez, Research Assistant, LCS

Maria Alaena Romero, Intern, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

All handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file.

Wednesday, October 4 — Joint Meeting with the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee — Crownpoint

Senator Pinto convened the committees at 10:15 a.m. Clinton Jim, community member and rancher, was invited to offer an invocation. Mr. Jim offered a prayer in the Diné language. The committee members and staff introduced themselves. Representative Thomson identified herself as the appointed chair for the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee (LHHS) this day, then turned the chair over to Representative Johnson, whose home chapter is Standing Rock, to conduct the business of the joint meeting.

Welcome and Status Update

Johnny Johnson, president, Standing Rock Chapter, Navajo Nation, greeted the members of both committees and welcomed them to Standing Rock. He provided some personal information about his role in Standing Rock and introduced some key members of his staff. He acknowledged members of the community who were present in the audience and offered a brief history of the establishment of the Standing Rock Chapter and house. President Johnson recognized the legislators and thanked them for their past support, noting that they would be presented with funding requests in the 2018 legislative session. He highlighted some future projects, including the placement of water lines and increased housing. He expressed thanks to Representative Johnson for facilitating the meeting at Standing Rock and recognized Senator Pinto and Senator Shendo.

Senator Pinto introduced himself and his granddaughter, Shannon Pinto. Representative Johnson introduced her mother, Marie A. Johnson, and welcomed her. Representative Johnson continued to introduce key members of the community throughout the day.

Native American Public Health, Workforce and Community Health

Nathania Tsosie, M.C.R.P., associate director, Center for Native American Health, University of New Mexico (UNM) Health Sciences Center (HSC), and Norman Coeoyate, cultural engagement liaison, UNM HSC, were invited to address the committees. Ms. Tsosie

thanked the members of the chapter in both English and Navajo. Mr. Cooyate likewise expressed thanks, especially acknowledging Senator Pinto for his long service to the legislature.

Ms. Tsosie described the mission and vision of the Center for Native American Health and identified key staff members. She highlighted the model for American Indian (AI) student development that is employed at the center. The primary goals are to promote employment and to help prepare Native American communities to accept students back into the community following graduation. Mr. Cooyate presented demographics regarding AI students currently enrolled at UNM. He noted that there is an increasing trend, particularly among AI women graduating with baccalaureate degrees, with graduation rates exceeding the general population. Ms. Tsosie offered a breakdown of the health care disciplines chosen by the 119 AI students enrolled in 2016-2017, noting that 19 are medical students in the pipeline to become doctors. This year, there are six students in the UNM Combined BA/MD Degree Program who are poised to enter medical school next year. One AI student will graduate this year with a pharmacy degree. The nursing program is the largest program offered through the center and has 40 students pursuing bachelor's degrees and four students pursuing doctoral degrees in nursing.

Mr. Cooyate described the importance of honoring all of the graduates. He described a special program in place at the undergraduate level that is designed to expose high school students to the potential for a career in medicine and to prepare them for success in college, both socially and academically. A multilevel system of support connects community members with an Indian support center, cultural connectedness, research and mentorships. Various community-based educational initiatives were described. Efforts are made to not only encourage educational pursuits but to help students retain their connections with their home communities and preserve the likelihood that they will return. Attention is paid to health disparities in communities.

Ms. Tsosie spoke about the center's focus on AIs in the areas of physical and behavioral health. Healthy Children, Strong Families is a community-based intervention aimed at improving the health of AI children aged two to five. A second study being conducted is exploring tribal solutions to address adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). This project is looking at the importance of a resilience-based approach to preventing ACEs in tribal communities.

Questions and comments from committee members addressed the following:

- the extent to which communities are prepared to incorporate graduating students back into their communities; some are better prepared than others, but the center is intentionally working with communities in a wide variety of ways;
- the importance of closely following AI students as they transition from very small communities to larger academic settings;
- the percentage of graduating students who serve Native American populations after graduation; about one in three graduating students goes back to the reservation;

- encouragement to expand the summer intern program; the program is part of a larger initiative at the Santa Fe Indian School and is not under the control of the center;
- encouragement to collaborate with community colleges and other UNM branches;
- clarification regarding the graduation rate; AI students face many challenges, such as financial stress and other family and community obligations, but the rate of graduation appears to be higher than the general public;
- whether there is any anticipated impact from the consideration of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) on the work and programs of the center; the impact would be more upon those Native Americans who now have access to health care services as a result of the PPACA; the center is not directly funded as a result of the PPACA;
- whether AI students who are participating in health care programs in public and charter schools are matriculating at UNM; those data are not tracked;
- whether there is any collaboration with the Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine; not now, but there is interest;
- recognition of the importance of the UNM Combined BA/MD Degree Program in encouraging participation of minority populations in underserved areas;
- whether there is alignment between the number of graduates in health care programs and the needs of communities; specific data are not available in that area yet; however, tribes and pueblos report needs in all areas;
- clarification regarding a discontinued program at the Shiprock campus of Diné College; it was discontinued due to inadequate bandwidth to support online learning; efforts to upgrade the system were local;
- whether that online program could be instituted; the road map is there; however, a local contact is needed; and
- concern about unmet needs for health care access for Navajo people in Gallup.

Pastor Foerster, Bible Baptist Shepherd Church of Standing Rock, offered a prayer before lunch.

Tribally Managed Medicaid Managed Care

Representative Johnson turned the chairmanship over to Representative Thomson, appointed chair of the LHHS.

Mark Freeland, executive staff assistant, Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President, introduced Yvonne Kee-Billison, executive staff assistant, Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President, Juan Massey, executive staff assistant, Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President, and Travis Renville, Medicare and Medicaid managed care consultant. The panel presented the plan and efforts to establish a tribally managed Medicaid managed care organization (MCO).

Mr. Freeland began by identifying the two components of the project: policy and development. Work on the project began in May. He provided an overview of the characteristics

of the Navajo Nation, which has 187,000 members, 47% of whom live in poverty. Chronic liver disease, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and injuries characterize the top five health issues of the Navajo Nation. The work on the project began with the invitation of the Human Services Department (HSD) to address health issues. In June, the HSD held a tribal consultation to obtain input on Centennial Care 2.0 that included broad representation from the Navajo Nation's health care system. In August, representatives met with Secretary of Human Services Brent Earnest regarding their intention to submit their own application for a Medicaid 1115 waiver to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Ms. Kee-Billison noted that in 2013, the Navajo Nation was authorized to engage in a study, resulting in a Medicaid task force to look at the feasibility of starting its own MCO. Steps to align and structure a system to better serve the health needs was then discussed with three states and the 638 tribes, and many important discussions are occurring regarding the varied health and aging needs among Navajos.

Mr. Massey described his professional background that led him to involvement in this project. Section 17 of the federal Indian Reorganization Act provided a framework for a business model for economic development within the Navajo Nation and is a vehicle that can be used to develop an Indian MCO. A formal charter has been created and signed off on by the president of the Navajo Nation. The charter is currently awaiting authorization by the CMS.

Mr. Renville is serving as a consultant to explore ways to make Medicaid programs work on the Navajo Nation. He has done research on Indian country managed care; previous efforts in other locations failed due to lack of reliable financing mechanisms, critical mass of members and adequate net worth. The 1115 waiver renewal concept paper encouraged a tribal partnership to manage Medicaid. The company is being structured to meet Office of Superintendent of Insurance and CMS requirements. The federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides language affirming the right of tribes to establish their own MCOs and limit membership to members of the tribes, which is the goal here in New Mexico. Meetings are continuing with the HSD and Medicaid representatives, with favorable support. A draft document is now going out for comment and will be considered at another tribal consultation.

Committee members had questions and comments covering the following areas:

- ways in which the MCO project potentially impacts other tribes in New Mexico; it will be Navajo specific, but at the request of the HSD, it would be open to other tribes and nations;
- clarification about the upcoming October 20 tribal consultation; it will cover the waiver renewal application that the HSD will be submitting to the CMS;
- clarification regarding the options for individual Native Americans to enroll; this Native American MCO will appear as an option for enrollment for all Native American members;

- ways in which Native Americans will be incentivized to join this MCO; through marketing and value-added benefits that are specifically targeted to Native Americans; additionally, the model will incorporate Navajo and other cultural competencies;
- whether traditional healing methods will be offered in addition to allopathic medicine; yes, that is the intent; one MCO hopes to implement specific metrics to demonstrate the effectiveness of these approaches;
- recognition of the serious challenges in creating a model that will serve the health needs of a very diverse population;
- whether the state will benefit from a model such as this and in what ways; the state and the tribes are working together to improve the health of all nations; communications and relationships are improved; additionally, great economic benefit is anticipated;
- a suggestion that the LHHS write a formal letter of support for the concept to the CMS; there was a request to consider this in November when the request for proposals (RFP) closes;
- recognition of the importance and efficacy of traditional Native American healing methods;
- a request to reconsider the proposal again at a future Indian Affairs Committee meeting when it is possible to be more open about the details of the project;
- clarification regarding when to expect notification from the HSD on approval of the concept; it is hoped that by February 18, 2018, a contract can be signed; the HSD must conduct a readiness review prior to final rollout in January 2019;
- the number or percentage of Native Americans who currently opt out of managed care; about 80,000 of 136,000 currently choose fee-for-service Medicaid;
- the number or percentage of Native Americans who qualify for Medicaid due to the expansion; it is not specifically known, but it is a lot;
- a request for the statistics regarding poverty and prevalent diseases to be provided; Mr. Freeland said that a copy of the response to the HSD's concept paper will be provided;
- how a Native American MCO will be able to serve populations in very rural areas on the reservations; this is a concern that is being addressed; partnerships with UNM and the use of telehealth will help;
- a concern that profits are often generated at the expense of care; and
- clarification regarding the competitive nature of the RFP process.

Comments on Centennial Care 2.0

Erik Lujan, All Pueblo Council of Governors, provided input on the proposed renewal of the Centennial Care waiver. The All Pueblo Council of Governors has positions on individual tribal sovereignty; eligibility; fee-for-service versus managed care; information and data; leveraging of existing resources and relationships; joint ventures, partnerships and contractual agreements; and building a health system and network.

Mr. Lujan noted that a large percentage of Native Americans, mostly in very rural areas, are on Medicaid. As was identified in the previous panel, a great number of enrollees currently choose fee-for-service. He identified the pros and cons of each option. Comments on each of the areas of concern were provided to the HSD during the comment period.

Mr. Lujan offered some feedback on the proposal for a Native American MCO by identifying potential hurdles and benefits of such an approach. He noted that one benefit could be the ability of the state to obtain a 100% federal match on some services provided to Native Americans outside of Indian Health Service (IHS) hospitals as more tribal members elect to enter a managed care environment.

Mr. Lujan concluded with the following key points: 1) tribes should have the individual right to undertake managed care within their own boundaries and on their own terms; 2) the fee-for-service program must be sustained until tribes can demonstrate expertise in managing care in a new framework; 3) change must be navigated and administered in a way that maintains sovereignty; 4) the pueblos will continue to support the PPACA, the federal Indian Healthcare Improvement Act and Medicaid expansion; and 5) pueblos will continue to oppose the elimination of retroactive eligibility, dental services as a buy-in and transitional Medicaid.

Questions and comments were offered regarding clarification of the location of IHS hospitals; this is ever changing; many IHS hospitals no longer provide inpatient services.

Public Comment

Felda Yazzi, a lifelong resident of Standing Rock, expressed her great appreciation to Representative Johnson for bringing the committees to this community. She strongly advocated for continued support for early childhood programs.

President Johnson reiterated that he will be bringing capital outlay requests to the legislature for the 2019 fiscal year (FY). He also spoke favorably about Head Start programs.

Recess

There being no further business before the committees, the meeting recessed at 3:35 p.m.

Thursday, October 5 — Ojo Encino

The IAC reconvened as a subcommittee at 10:25 a.m., with Senator Shendo acting as co-chair. Committee members and staff introduced themselves.

Welcome and Status Update

George Werito, Jr., president, Ojo Encino Chapter, explained that the roads from U.S. 550 to Ojo Encino are terrible. Although the Ojo Encino, Torreon and Counselor chapters (Tri-Chapters) have joined forces to overcome challenges they face, the roads remain a singular obstacle to the well-being of the communities.

David Rico, president, Torreon Chapter, thanked the legislators and staff for coming and discussed issues that Torreon faces.

President Werito said that the distance between Ojo Encino and the Navajo Nation central government in Window Rock, Arizona, makes him feel that his community is forgotten.

Samuel Sage, community services coordinator, Counselor Chapter, said that Harry Domingo, Sr., the president of the Counselor Chapter, sent his regards but was unable to be present at the meeting. On behalf of President Domingo, Mr. Sage said that chapter concerns include oil and gas development in the area and the involvement, and lack thereof, by the federal government; the overuse of roads that do not get regular upkeep; the air quality from the dust created by the many trucks employed by the oil and gas industry; and the hydrogen phosphate leaks in the Counselor and Lybrook areas.

In response to a question, President Werito explained that the Ojo Encino Chapter straddles two counties, which makes it difficult to stay high on the priority list of either county. In fact, he said, the last time any significant state funds were directed to the area was after then-Governor Bill Richardson got stuck in a muddy arroyo when he visited Ojo Encino. According to President Werito, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) also does not consider the roads in the vicinity a priority.

The use of millings was proposed as an alternate means of road upkeep. President Rico said that using millings to fill in the many potholes is something the communities are considering. He said that it is not acceptable that oil and gas companies are making money in the area while making the roads unusable for others, and they are not being required to invest any money in return. Mr. Sage said that it is not just the roads, but also the noise and odor, that are having a real impact on locals.

President Werito introduced Alana McGrattan, Tribal Libraries Program coordinator, New Mexico State Library, who explained that the program is funded each year from a general obligation bond. She said that the Torreon Community Library is seeking funding to satisfy the 10% needed to match federal funds to establish the fiber connection necessary to offer interconnectivity at the library.

Safety Efforts on U.S. 550

Armando Armendariz, P.E., director, Design and Construction Division, Department of Transportation (DOT), introduced himself and Rick Padilla, P.E., state maintenance engineer, DOT. Mr. Padilla said that there has been work done on the U.S. 550 guardrails, and from FY 2014 through FY 2017, the road has been rated as being in good shape. When U.S. 550 was built, the state purchased a warranty that covers road improvements for 20 years or for a certain number of passenger miles. The road is 15 years old, and the warranty will probably hit the passenger miles number in about five years. Obviously, Mr. Armendariz said, there has been more road usage in the northern part of U.S. 550, where oil and gas exploration is happening.

Compared to N.M. 44, which was the two-lane highway U.S. 550 replaced, the current condition of U.S. 550 is a major improvement. It is now a four-lane road, and there are shoulder areas, guardrails, dedicated passing lanes and better siding and striping of the road. The new highway has both increased the speed of travel and decreased the number of fatalities and injuries in crashes. The DOT has provided U.S. 550 with more money in repairs and construction than any other road in the state. Mr. Armendariz explained that U.S. 550 was designed to ensure that cultural and natural resources were not harmed in its construction.

In reference to the millings, Mr. Armendariz explained that the millings are available, but any entity using them is responsible for their retrieval, and hauling them would require a significant investment.

Drilling on and near Sacred Sites

Daniel Tso, a community member, said that because of the poor state of the roads in the area, there have been instances where medical help could not be reached within an appropriate time frame. He explained that Ojo Encino and the surrounding chapters have notified the BIA and the Navajo Nation Division of Transportation, which have acknowledged that the road is dangerous but have only responded by telling the chapters that there is no funding to repair the roads. Mr. Tso said that area schools have already had to call two "snow days" this year when school buses were unable to travel the roads because mud made them impassable.

Regarding drilling, Mr. Tso explained that he and some other community members from the Tri-Chapters created the Concerned Citizens Committee. This committee works to prevent the destruction of sacred sites by the actions of the oil and gas industry. He said that the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) offered up to 5,000 acres for lease, but due to the support from surrounding tribes and concerned citizens, the lease was delayed four times and only 843 acres went up for auction. However, much of the land leases happened without the communities' knowledge.

Mr. Tso introduced Teresa Seamster, chair, Northern New Mexico Group of the Rio Grande Chapter of the Sierra Club. Ms. Seamster said that some oil wells are less than one mile from schools or people's homes. There are 587,000 active wells, some fewer than 50 feet from where children live and go to school. She said that as many as 16,000 people have developed difficulty breathing, dizziness, chest pain and headaches, and she said that the region is now permeated by a notable smell of gases.

Enforcement of Wage Theft Violations

Jason Dean, director, Labor Relations Division, Workforce Solutions Department (WSD), provided the committee with copies of the Labor Relations Division's annual report for FY 2017. He covered the information in the report and explained that for the department to get involved in a wage claim dispute, an employee needs to file a work-theft complaint stating that the employee did not get paid for the hours the employee worked.

The other two issues about which the Labor Relations Division has heard the most complaints are the cap of \$10,000 for wage-theft claims and the document retention time requirements. In both cases, Mr. Dean said, the WSD is reviewing its own rules and is committed to carrying out its statutory duties.

Regarding the \$10,000 cap, Mr. Dean said that the WSD does not intervene when a wage-theft claim exceeds \$10,000.

Regarding document retention, the law requires businesses to keep one year of records while the statute of limitations for wage-theft claims is three years. In many instances, by the time a wage-theft claim is filed, many of the records have been lawfully destroyed. Unless the document retention law is extended to three years in statute, this problem will persist.

Discussing the wage claim process with the committee, Mr. Dean said that the WSD makes a decision on a claim, and a judge either upholds or denies the ruling. During the process, there is an ongoing opportunity for the claimant and the defendant to settle.

Minutes

Upon a motion properly made and seconded, and without opposition, the IAC approved the minutes of its previous meeting.

Public Comment

Mario Atencio from Torreon discussed the systemic problems that local students face in the education system.

Sherry Begaye, secretary/treasurer, Torreon Chapter, raised a concern regarding chronic health problems of community members, primarily children who are born with birth defects. She said that there needs to be a balance between industry and environmental protection.

Recess

There being no further business for the day, the meeting recessed at 3:30 p.m.

Friday, October 6 — Pueblo of Sandia

The IAC reconvened at 10:15 a.m. at the Sandia Resort and Casino, with Representative Lente acting as co-chair.

Welcome and Status Update

Lawrence Gutierrez, lieutenant governor, Pueblo of Sandia, welcomed the committee and explained how the casino benefits the tribe and surrounding communities, as well as Albuquerque. Sandia Resort and Casino employs 1,875 residents of New Mexico, in addition to 316 people who work for the Pueblo of Sandia government. A significant number of the employees are Native American.

Lieutenant Governor Gutierrez said that the Pueblo of Sandia uses gaming and gas station revenue in a variety of ways to improve the lives of tribal members. Educational opportunities and health care are two major recipients of funding.

A discussion ensued about budget cuts and the funding that would be allocated to New Mexico tribes from the federal and state governments. Committee staff was tasked with inquiring about federal funding to New Mexico's nations, tribes and pueblos.

Tribal Fuel Taxation 101

Teresa Leger, attorney, Leger Law & Strategy, LLC, provided an overview of the tribal fuel tax. Ms. Leger discussed the legal history and policy benefits of how New Mexico's fuel tax system operates. Recently proposed bills aimed to change how the system operates and would have disrupted a well-oiled machine. In fact, she said, many tribal-state tax cases that have set the bar for laws nationally came out of New Mexico courts.

Ms. Leger said that current tribal gas tax deductions are consistent with the state's attempt to avoid dual taxation and that the state and tribes agree in principle that tax revenues should be used to provide essential government services. Consistent with this principle, the state benefits from having strong tribal economies and strong tribal governments with the resources to provide essential services.

Carolyn Abeita, attorney, VanAmberg, Rogers, Yepa, Abeita & Gomez, LLP; New Mexico Native American Petroleum Coalition, said that tribal and state taxes should support economic activity, provide certainty to support long-term investments, not overburden industry with business expectations and be consistent with taxes across jurisdictional lines. Ms. Abeita explained the differences between how the current tax structure works and what was proposed regarding taxation of gasoline and diesel and what is meant by "tax at the rack".

Regis Pecos, senior policy analyst for the house majority floor leader, addressed the negative impact that tribes would face if the deductions were removed from law. He highlighted the importance of having the legislature understand the broad tax policy supporting tribal distributors' gas tax deductions.

Committee members and the panel of presenters discussed how fuel prices at gas stations on and off tribal lands are determined by the market and how they affect one another.

Domestic Violence Against Native American Women

Deleana OtherBull, executive director, Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women (CSVANW), and Amber Crotty, delegate, 23rd Navajo Nation Council, provided the committee with the 2017 tribal leader brief from the CSVANW. The mission of the coalition is to stop violence against Native American women and children by advocating for social change. The CSVANW works with all of New Mexico's Native American nations, tribes and pueblos and focuses on training, technical assistance, policy advocacy and support.

In response to a question from the committee, Ms. OtherBull addressed the Home for Women and Children in Shiprock, which closed because of some tax problems. However, she said, there is a new shelter going up in the same location.

Upon a motion properly made and seconded, and without opposition, the IAC requested that staff draft a letter on behalf of the committee to members of New Mexico's congressional delegation to support initiatives that work to prevent violence against Native American women and to reauthorize funding for the federal Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) of 1994 and the VAWA of 2000.

Services for Urban Indians

Ron Solimon, chair, Albuquerque Commission on Indian Affairs, updated the committee on the work of the commission. In addition to Mr. Solimon, commissioners include William F. Riding, homeless outreach coordinator, First Nations Community HealthSource; Laurie Weahkee, executive director, Native American Voters Alliance; Michael Canfield, president and chief executive officer, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center; and Dr. Lloyd Lee, associate professor of Native American studies, UNM.

The commission promotes the health, safety and general welfare of Native Americans living in Albuquerque and serves as their advocate. The commission looks at matters of employment, education, economy, health, environment, government and access to services for Native Americans.

The Albuquerque Commission on Indian Affairs is nearing completion of a report that is being compiled to better understand the current resources available to Native Americans living in the Albuquerque area. The hope is that the report will spur the city's various departments to start collecting data on how many urban Indians are using their services and how often.

The commission provided its initial findings to the committee and is hopeful that the data will help to identify successful programs and the challenges that persist.

The IAC thanked the commission for its work and noted that it is doing important, and often neglected, work.

Public Comment

Anthony Ortiz, governor, Pueblo of San Felipe, discussed a proposal by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science and UNM to excavate paleontological resources adjacent to the Pueblo of San Felipe and the Pueblo of Santo Domingo on ancestral land now held by the BLM, known as the Espinosa Ridge (formerly Ball Ranch), which is an "area of critical environmental concern", or an "ACEC".

The excavation was long held up by a stay by the courts, but now that the case is resolved, excavations are imminent. Due to how soon the excavations are scheduled to begin,

Governor Ortiz urged committee members to write to Secretary of Cultural Affairs Veronica Gonzales, under whose auspices the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science operates, to prevent any disruptions on this land, which is of great importance to the Pueblo of San Felipe. In response, some committee members instructed staff to prepare and send those letters.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the IAC meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.