

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

**September 29, 2020
House Chambers and Video Conference
Santa Fe**

The third meeting of the Indian Affairs Committee was called to order by Senator Shannon D. Pinto, co-chair, on September 29, 2020 at 10:18 a.m. in the House Chambers and by video and audio conference via an online platform.

Present

Rep. Georgene Louis, Co-Chair (In-Person)
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto, Co-Chair (In-Person)
Rep. Eliseo Lee Alcon (In-Person)
Rep. Anthony Allison (In-Person)
Rep. Kelly K. Fajardo (In-Person)
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson (In-Person)
Sen. Richard C. Martinez (Online)
Sen. Cliff R. Pirtle (In-Person)
Sen. Nancy Rodriguez (Online)
Sen. Benny Shendo, Jr. (Online)
Sen. William P. Soules (Online)

Absent

Rep. Zachary J. Cook
Rep. Derrick J. Lente
Sen. Mark Moores
Sen. William E. Sharer
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Advisory Members

Rep. Gail Chasey (Online)
Rep. Harry Garcia (In-Person)
Sen. Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales (Online)
Sen. Gabriel Ramos (Online)
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero (Online)
Rep. Melanie A. Stansbury (Online)
Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson (Online)

Rep. Abbas Akhil
Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos
Sen. Stuart Ingle
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Sen. George K. Munoz
Sen. Clemente "Memé" Sanchez

Guest Legislator

Sen. Linda M. Lopez (Online)

Staff

Lenaya Montoya, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Sabina Gaynor, Bill Drafter, LCS
Sara Wiedmaier, Research Assistant, LCS

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

Tuesday, September 29

Welcome and Introductions (10:18 a.m.)

Senator Pinto welcomed the committee and introduced the presentations of the day.

Update from the Indian Affairs Department (IAD) (10:27 a.m.)

Lynn Trujillo, secretary, IAD, provided updates from the IAD. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=IAC&Date=9/29/2020&ItemNumber=1>.

Questions and comments from committee members included the following:

- what is the amount of funding that has been expended, how was the funding expended and what is the balance of the funding;
- what is being done to address the lack of internet service for education in tribal communities;
- mobile hotspots for wireless service that are provided for education are not sufficient and often do not function;
- a request was made for data on the number of children lacking internet access who are failing or being marked absent from school;
- a request was made for a detailed list of capital outlay funds to determine how those funds are being distributed within tribal communities;
- educational requirements should be reevaluated by the Santa Fe Public School District, and lack of infrastructure is causing students to fail in both private and public schools;
- students, particularly young ones, should be back in class;
- what public safety initiatives will the committee be reporting on during the interim;
- it is important to ensure that those who intentionally leave are not reported as missing through missing person text messaging, and this issue should be reported to the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee;
- there are concerns regarding the *Yazzie v. Martinez* lawsuit and how the ruling will continue to be implemented to incorporate culturally relevant information and close all gaps in education;
- does the IAD have the ability to identify resources and funding to allow tribes to publish their own educational material;
- coordination of tribal communities in crisis needs to be considered;

- how is COVID-19 reporting being disseminated to tribes when so many members lack internet access;
- is follow-up action being taken to ensure that tribes lacking internet access are receiving notices and reports from the IAD;
- is the IAD considering legislation to expand broadband services to ensure that there is no lapse in service in tribal communities;
- are the census extension and federal government efforts helping those conducting the census to gather information;
- a report to the governor is due November 1, 2020;
- has the suicide rate increased within tribes;
- how is the Albuquerque Public School District planning to incorporate cultural outreach programs; and
- a request was made that data on how COVID-19 has impacted film funding grantees' work be provided to the committee.

Updates from the Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine (BCOM): Working with Tribal Communities to Build Health Care; Sustainability and Planning for the Future (1:12 p.m.)

Dr. Bill Pieratt, dean and chief academic officer, BCOM; Justin McHorse, assistant vice president of diversity and inclusion, BCOM; and Dr. Adela Lente, associate dean of clinical education and associate professor of clinical medicine, BCOM, presented on legislation that the BCOM will support for the 2021 legislative session.

Questions and comments from committee members included the following:

- would the proposed legislation create a board of advisors or expand the size of an existing board;
- would in-state students take priority over out-of-state students under this legislation;
- would this legislation create a compact;
- how will this legislation address rural areas of the state needing practitioners and keep medical students who graduate in this state practicing here;
- how are the voices of Indian nations, tribes and pueblos integrated; and
- there is concern over the lack of Indian nation, tribe and pueblo representation on advisory boards.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion made by Senator Pinto, the minutes of the August 4, 2020 and September 1, 2020 meetings were approved without objection.

Veterans' Issues in Tohatchi During COVID-19 (2:04 p.m.)

Laris Manuelito, commander-elect, Tohatchi Veterans Organization, gave a presentation regarding veterans' issues in Tohatchi during the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/IAC%20092920%20Item%203%20Veterans%20issues%20presentation.pdf>.

Questions and comments from committee members included the following:

- how is the mobile unit funded;
- does the Navajo Nation recognize veterans organizations for funding purposes;
- what kind of outreach efforts are being made to veterans;
- there is emphasis on interagency communication under the current administration;
- what are the differing outcomes of Arizona Native American veterans compared to New Mexico Native American veterans;
- all avenues for reimbursement and funding for commuting veterans seeking medical care must be explored; and
- a request was made for additional veteran cemeteries or a focus on maintaining existing veteran cemeteries.

Public Comment (2:57 p.m.)

There were no public comments.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.