

Ramah Navajo Chapter  
Talking Points  
Before Indian Affairs Committee  
Of the New Mexico State Legislature  
July 18, 2016

- Introduction
- Ramah is a Mormon term in the bible which came with the Mormon Settlers in the late 1700 to now known as the Ramah Village or Ramah. Ramah Navajo community on the other hand was generally named after Ramah by the Mormon Settlers until the time Ramah Navajo reservation was formed and the Ramah Navajo Chapter was established by Resolution CY-20-55 as a subdivision of the Navajo Nation. Ramah Navajo in Navajo is Tlo'chini''(or place of wild onions). This place is currently called Zuni Mountain (formerly Oso Ridge) south of Ft. Wingate Depot.
- Tlo'chini'' Dine' have lived in Tlo'chinni'' area from the time immemorial through the time before and after the infamous Long Walk to and from Basque Redondo or Ft. Sumner in concentration camp of the U.S. Cavalry for 4 years. Tlo'chinni'' Dine were rounded up then the long walk and released from Ft. Wingate Army Depot. This committee and the state legislature should be mindful that Ramah Navajo also has interest in the division of Ft. Wingate should discussion arise for an action of Congress sometime in the future.
- Just south of this chapter house one will see a dilapidated hogan still sitting was where chapter meetings took place for many years until this chapter house was built. This local chapter government and its programs are now located here on approximately 7 acres of land surrounded by allotment land. Thanks to allottee named Jesus Eriacho the late father of Cecil Eriacho, Vice President, generous enough to donate a portion of his allotment land initially for establishing a Day School back in the 40s.
- Ramah Navajo Chapter is one of 110 certified chapters across the Navajo Nation, including the satellite communities of Alamo, Ramah and Tohajiilee Chapter, as subdivision of the central Navajo Nation Government located in Window Rock, Arizona. The satellite communities are also known as the Alamo, Ramah or Canoncito (Tohajiilee) Band of the Navajo Tribe of Indians by an Act of Congress after War World II.
- Ramah Navajo has a population of about 3,500 and growing within the so called checkerboarded status of the Ramah Navajo reservation composed of 146,953 acres. The land interspersed composed of Navajo Trust Land, Navajo Tribal Fee Land, Ramah Band Trust Land, Ramah Navajo Chapter Fee Land, State Trust Land and private land with the boundary of the Ramah Navajo reservation.
- Ramah Navajo has about 50% unemployment rate and employers of the community are as following with permanent positions and they also provide temporary employment, including student summer employment and school breaks from high school or college. Self

employment exists through ranching in cattle and sheep and individual entrepreneurship to sale of artisan such as rug weaving, jewelry, pottery, art work, welding, etc.

1. Ramah Navajo School Board, Inc. (300)
2. Ramah Navajo Chapter (80)
3. Ramah Navajo Agency (15)
4. Ramah Navajo Utility Authority (3)
5. Ramah District Court of the Navajo Nation (10)
6. Pine Hill Market of Navajo Nation Shopping Centers (15)

- The Ramah Navajo School Board (RNSB) was established and incorporated in the month of February of 1970. The Board was formed by Ramah Navajo soon after the closer of Ramah High School of Gallup McKinley Country Schools in 1968. The Board to this day operates Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grades with student enrollment of about 250 to 300. The Board also operates non-educational 638 programs and Indian Health Services (HIS) by contracts through Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1979.
- The Ramah Navajo Chapter also had begun contracting the BIA programs and services in 1984. These are contracts for Trust Services and Natural Resources, Real Estate Services and Probate, Community Development, Transpiration, Facilities Maintenance, The most recent contract entered into with the bureau is Roads Maintenance Program in 2015.
- It is through this contracting by Ramah Navajo School Board and Ramah Navajo Chapter the Ramah Navajo Chapter filed a lawsuit in the early 1990 against the Secretary of Interior for lack of Contract Support Cost. This became class action suit for Indian Tribes and tribal organizations across the country operating P.L. 93-638 programs and services. The lead class members were Ramah Navajo Chapter, Oglala Sue Tribe and Pueblo of Zuni. The final settlement agreement was reached in Federal District in Albuquerque in February of 2016 and in amount of \$940 million to be distributed among 599 tribes and tribal organizations. The Ramah Navajo Chapter is expected to receive about \$7.8 million and the Navajo Nation about \$58 million perhaps as soon as next month or August 2016.
- Ramah Navajo has a need for major development of its infrastructure for roads, water line , power line, housing, renewal energy, airport, natural resources tourism and the like to keep up with the wealth of nations all across the country and along with the need to begin economic development in areas of commercial and industrial development pursuant to approved chapter resolution that approved Community-Based Land Use Plan subject to approval by the Resources and Development Committee of the Navajo Nation Council scheduled for August 16, 2016 in the chapter house.
- Today, the Ramah Navajo Chapter humbly requests this committee and senators and representatives of the New Mexico State Legislative Session in January 2017 for the necessary appropriations that will fulfill the needs of Ramah Navajo.