

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2958

To fulfill the United States Government's trust responsibility to serve the higher education needs of the Navajo people and to clarify, unify, and modernize prior Diné College legislation.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 7, 2015

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To fulfill the United States Government's trust responsibility to serve the higher education needs of the Navajo people and to clarify, unify, and modernize prior Diné College legislation.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Diné College Act of
5 2015”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds as follows:

1 (1) The Treaty of 1868 between the United
2 States of America and the Navajo Tribe of Indians
3 provides for the education of the citizens of the Nav-
4 ajo Nation.

5 (2) The Navajo Nation created and chartered
6 the Navajo Community College by Resolution CN-
7 95-68 as a wholly owned educational entity of the
8 Navajo Nation.

9 (3) In 1971, Congress enacted the Navajo Com-
10 munity College Act (Public Law 92-189; 25 U.S.C.
11 640a et seq.).

12 (4) The Navajo Nation officially changed the
13 name of the Navajo Community College to Diné Col-
14 lege by Resolution CAP-35-97.

15 (5) The purpose of Diné College is to provide
16 educational opportunities to the Navajo people and
17 others in areas important to the economic and social
18 development of the Navajo Nation.

19 (6) The educational philosophy of Diné College
20 is to apply principles of Sa'ah Naaghái Bik'eh
21 Hózhóón (Diné Philosophy) to advance quality stu-
22 dent learning through training of the mind and
23 heart.

1 (7) The United States has a trust and treaty
2 responsibility to the Navajo Nation to provide for
3 the educational opportunities for Navajo people.

4 (8) Significant portions of the Diné College's
5 infrastructure are dilapidated and pose a serious
6 health and safety risk to students, employees, and
7 the public.

8 (9) This Act is consistent with Executive Order
9 13592 (76 Fed. Reg. 76603, relating to improving
10 American Indian and Alaska Native educational op-
11 portunities and strengthening tribal colleges and
12 universities) and fulfills the United States Govern-
13 ment's trust responsibility to serve the educational
14 needs of the Navajo people.

15 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

16 The purpose of this Act is to ensure that the Navajo
17 Nation and Navajo people—

18 (1) exercise their right to self-determination,
19 particularly in matters relating to their internal and
20 local affairs;

21 (2) maintain and strengthen their distinct insti-
22 tutions of higher education through the teaching of
23 the Navajo language, culture, traditions, and his-
24 tory; and

1 (3) improve their economic and social condi-
2 tions through higher education and postsecondary
3 vocational training.

4 **SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.**

5 In this Act:

6 (1) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CON-
7 GRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Con-
8 gress” means—

9 (A) the Committee on Indian Affairs and
10 the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;
11 and

12 (B) the Committee on Natural Resources,
13 the Committee on Education and the Work-
14 force, and the Committee on Appropriations of
15 the House of Representatives.

16 (2) COLLEGE.—The term “College” means
17 Diné College.

18 (3) OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE.—The term
19 “operation and maintenance” means all cost and ex-
20 penses associated with the customary daily operation
21 of the Diné College and necessary maintenance
22 costs.

23 (4) INFRASTRUCTURE.—The term “infrastruc-
24 ture” means Diné College buildings, water and
25 sewer facilities, roads, foundation, information tech-

1 nology, and telecommunications, including class-
2 rooms and external matters such as walkways.

3 (5) RENOVATIONS AND REPAIRS.—The term
4 “renovations and repairs” means modernization and
5 improvements to the infrastructure.

6 (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
7 the Secretary of the Interior.

8 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF DINÉ COLLEGE.**

9 Congress authorizes the Diné College to receive all
10 Federal funding and resources under this Act and other
11 laws for its operation, improvement, and growth, includ-
12 ing—

13 (1) to provide programs of higher education for
14 citizens of the Navajo Nation and others;

15 (2) to provide vocational and technical edu-
16 cation for citizens of the Navajo Nation and others;

17 (3) to preserve and protect the Navajo lan-
18 guage, philosophy, and culture for citizens of the
19 Navajo Nation and others;

20 (4) to provide Navajo communities and people
21 with employment and training opportunities;

22 (5) to provide economic development and com-
23 munity outreach for Navajo communities and people;
24 and

1 (6) to provide a safe learning, working, and liv-
2 ing environment for students, employees, and the
3 public.

4 **SEC. 6. FACILITIES AND CAPITAL PROJECTS.**

5 From amounts made available under section 8(c), the
6 Diné College may undertake any renovations and repairs
7 to the infrastructure of the College identified in the sur-
8 vey, study, and report carried out under section 9.

9 **SEC. 7. STATUS OF FUNDS.**

10 Funds provided under this Act to the Diné College
11 may be treated as non-Federal, private funds of the Col-
12 lege for purposes of any provision of Federal law which
13 requires that non-Federal or private funds of the College
14 be used in a project for a specific purpose.

15 **SEC. 8. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—There are hereby authorized to be
17 appropriated to the Diné College, for each fiscal year, such
18 sums as may be necessary to pay for the operation and
19 maintenance of the College.

20 (b) BUDGET PLACEMENT.—The Secretary shall fund
21 the operation and maintenance of the Diné College sepa-
22 rately from tribal colleges and universities recognized and
23 funded by the Tribally Controlled College or University
24 Assistance Act of 1978 (25 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

1 (c) FACILITIES AND CAPITAL PROJECTS.—In addi-
2 tion to amounts appropriated under subsection (a), there
3 are authorized to be appropriated \$7,500,000, for each fis-
4 cal year, to carry out section 6.

5 **SEC. 9. SURVEY, STUDY, AND REPORT.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall conduct a de-
7 tailed survey and study of all capital projects and facility
8 needs of the Diné College, and shall report the results of
9 such survey and study to the appropriate committees of
10 Congress not later than October 31, 2016. Such report
11 shall include recommendations by the Secretary and any
12 recommendations or views submitted by the College and
13 the Navajo Nation regarding the capital projects and facil-
14 ity needs of the College.

15 (b) INVENTORY.—Not later than January 31, 2016,
16 an inventory prepared by Diné College identifying repairs,
17 alterations, and renovations to facilities required to meet
18 health and safety standards and other factors shall be sub-
19 mitted to the Secretary. The Secretary shall use the inven-
20 tory as baseline data to inform the survey, study, and re-
21 port required under subsection (a).

22 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Funds to carry
23 out this section may be drawn from general administrative
24 appropriations to the Secretary.

1 **SEC. 10. SUPERSESSION OF NAVAJO COMMUNITY COLLEGE**
2 **ACT.**

3 This Act supersedes—

4 (1) the Navajo Community College Act (Public
5 Law 92–189; 25 U.S.C., 640a et seq.);

6 (2) the Navajo Community College Assistance
7 Act of 1978 (Public Law 95–471, 92 Stat. 1325,
8 1329); and

9 (3) the Navajo Nation Higher Education Act of
10 2010 (Public Law 110–315, 122 Stat. 3468).

11 **SEC. 11. CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY FOR OTHER FEDERAL**
12 **FUNDS.**

13 Except as explicitly provided for in other Federal law,
14 nothing in this Act shall preclude the eligibility of the Diné
15 College to received Federal funding and resources under
16 any program authorized under the Higher Education Act
17 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), the Equity in Edu-
18 cational Land Grant Status Act (Title V, Part C, of Public
19 Law 103–382; 7 U.S.C. 301 note), or any other applicable
20 program for the benefit of institutions of higher education,
21 community colleges, or postsecondary educational institu-
22 tions.

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