



Office of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Hosting Another Public Hearing in Shiprock NM, on Violence against Navajo Women and Navajo LGBTQ

ST. MICHAELS, NAVAJO NATION - The Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission (“Commission”) will host a public hearing on Wednesday, February 19, 2014 to gather more information about violence against Navajo women and Navajo Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) tribal members. The Commission also wants to hear testimony on gender discrimination experienced by both Navajo Women and the LGBTQ community.

The hearing is important as it serves as the mechanism for gathering evidence to see how recommendations to amendment or modify Navajo Nation laws regarding the safety of women and LGBTQ. How traditional Navajo perspectives and other human rights standards on gender violence must be examined and analyzed to bring about some conclusion as to how rights of Navajo citizens can be surmised. Bringing attention and resolve to remedy these issues requires a collective and comprehensive approach that begins with those affected by violence. The public hearing is the first step toward advancing the issues that affect many Navajo families.

At the Tuba City, Arizona public hearing, held on January 15, 2014, Commissioner Dr. Jennifer Denetdale, told the audience “What do we do as family and community members about this violence?” Responsibility and accountability are important because without the voice from Navajo people, there will be no change.

Stella Martin, a transgender Navajo woman, also testified that “inclusive language in our Navajo laws that state lesbian, queer, gay, transgendered, bi-sexual, women, girls, and ladies will all be protected and treated equally.”

Reed Tso affirmed that non-natives were hurting Navajo women and police officers cannot do anything because they are non-natives. The passage of the Violence Against Woman Act of 2013 could help with these types of cases where the abuse happens on reservation lands and the victim is Navajo and the perpetrator is non-Navajo.

With your input and help, the Commission can analyze existing laws, close loop holes and make recommendations to current Navajo laws, regulations and policies to address the hideous nature of violence against Navajo citizens.

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The next public hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, February 19, 2014 at the Shiprock Chapter beginning at 10:00A.M. to 5:00 P.M. For more information call the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission at 928-871-7436.

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