

1                                   **JOINT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING NEEDED**  
2                                   **IMPROVEMENTS IN THE NAVAJO NATION'S ABILITY TO**  
3                                   **COLLECT AND TRACK CHILD SUPPORT PAYMENTS**

4                                   2009 GENERAL SESSION

5                                   STATE OF UTAH

6                                   **Chief Sponsor: Christine F. Watkins**

7                                   Senate Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

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9                                   **LONG TITLE**

10                                  **General Description:**

11                                  This joint resolution supports congressional action related to the Navajo Nation's  
12                                  ability to collect and track child support payments.

13                                  **Highlighted Provisions:**

14                                  This resolution:

- 15                                  ▶ provides background on the Navajo Nation, its needs, and its ability to collect and
- 16                                  track child support;
- 17                                  ▶ encourages Utah's congressional delegation to take action in specific areas; and
- 18                                  ▶ provides for distribution.

19                                  **Special Clauses:**

20                                  None

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22                                  *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

23                                  WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation is the largest Native American tribe within the  
24                                  boundaries of the United States and is larger than ten of the 50 states;

25                                  WHEREAS, Navajo children under the age of 18 comprise almost half the total  
26                                  population, and some 61% of Navajo grandparents are responsible for grandchildren under the  
27                                  age of 18;

28                                  WHEREAS, over half the population of the Navajo Nation lives below the poverty  
29                                  level, and over 40% of persons on the Navajo Nation are unemployed;

30 WHEREAS, collecting child support for children whose parents are able to pay child  
31 support may be critical in the health and education of a good portion of Navajo children;

32 WHEREAS, the federal government granted the Navajo Nation and 39 other tribes the  
33 ability to collect child support, establish paternity, and enforce child and medical support  
34 obligations, but did not grant the Navajo Nation access to information essential for  
35 investigation and enforcement;

36 WHEREAS, the federal government has suggested that some states charge the Navajo  
37 Nation for access to important personal files of potential payers of child support;

38 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation has collected almost \$3,000,000 in past-due child  
39 support and received more than 10,000 acknowledgments of paternity for Navajo children;  
40 and

41 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation department of child support enforcement has collected  
42 a total of \$7,248,237 in child support during fiscal year 2007:

43 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah  
44 encourage Utah's congressional delegation to take appropriate steps on behalf of the Navajo  
45 Nation to increase its effectiveness in child support collection and enforcement.

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Utah's congressional delegation is urged to  
47 encourage the federal government to include the Navajo Nation in a web access pilot program  
48 to obtain information critical to collection of child support for Navajo children.

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to:

- 50 (1) the members of Utah's congressional delegation;
- 51 (2) the president of the Navajo Nation;
- 52 (3) the speaker of the house of the Navajo Nation; and
- 53 (4) the secretary of human services for the Navajo Nation.