

Representative Christine F. Watkins proposes the following substitute bill:

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

2009 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Christine F. Watkins

Senate Sponsor: David P. Hinkins

LONG TITLE

General Description:

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

Highlighted Provisions:

This resolution:

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

Special Clauses:

None

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

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

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; and

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

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

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

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

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

Fiscal Note

**H.J.R. 5 1st Sub. (Buff) - Joint Resolution Supporting Needed Improvements
in the Navajo Nation's Ability to Collect and Track Child Support Payments**

2009 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for individuals, businesses, or local governments.
