



NEW MEXICO LEGISLATURE

**ECONOMIC AND
RURAL
DEVELOPMENT AND
POLICY COMMITTEE**

2025 INTERIM FINAL REPORT

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SERVICE
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INTERIM SUMMARY

Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee 2025 Interim Summary

The Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on April 28, 2025 for the 2025 interim. The committee met five times, twice at the State Capitol and thrice in communities around the state. The committee traveled to Mescalero and Corona, Los Lunas and Farmington. The committee planned to meet in Gallup, but that meeting was canceled because it conflicted with the first special session of the fifty-seventh legislature.

During the 2025 interim, the committee heard presentations on issues facing rural communities in New Mexico. Topics included economic pathways through forest restoration and water management; the development of energy economies, such as wind and geothermal energy; housing affordability; and agriculture and food systems economies. The committee also heard reports on local economic development initiatives and challenges from the host cities and surrounding communities.

Other presentation topics explored by the committee included workforce education and development; international trade initiatives; security system use by businesses; outdoor recreation; creative and cultural industries; economic support for survivors of gender-based violence; trade ports in McKinley and Bernalillo counties; and libraries' role in rural New Mexico.

WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE

**2025 APPROVED
WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE
for the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

Members

Sen. Angel M. Charley, Chair
Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Jay C. Block
Sen. Pat Boone
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. Martha Garcia
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez

Sen. Antonio Maestas
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Rep. Marian Matthews
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Rep. Linda Serrato
Rep. Sarah Silva
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Advisory Members

Sen. Heather Berghmans
Rep. Catherine J. Cullen
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Anita Gonzales
Rep. Jenifer Jones
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Raymundo Lara
Rep. Charlotte Little

Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Jimmy G. Mason
Rep. Rod Montoya
Rep. Mark B. Murphy
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen
Sen. James G. Townsend

Work Plan

The Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee (ERDPC) was created by the New Mexico Legislative Council on April 28, 2025. During the 2025 interim, and as time permits, the ERDPC will explore and discuss major areas and specific issues affecting rural economic development and policy as follows:

- A. updates from government agencies involved in economic development, including:
1. the Economic Development Department;
 2. the Workforce Solutions Department;
 3. the Regulation and Licensing Department;
 4. the New Mexico Department of Agriculture;
 5. the Tourism Department;

6. the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department;
 7. the New Mexico Finance Authority;
 8. the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority;
 9. the General Services Department;
 10. the Department of Environment;
 11. the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion;
 12. the Office of the State Engineer;
 13. the Early Childhood Education and Care Department; and
 14. the Cultural Affairs Department;
- B. reports on sector-based economic drivers, including:
1. energy and climate economies:
 - a. clean technologies and energy economies;
 - b. tribal energy development around New Mexico;
 - c. site readiness and meeting the energy needs of New Mexico companies;
 - d. regional transmission organizations;
 - e. taxation of projects on New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority property; and
 - f. climate resilience, restoration-based employment and extreme heat exposure and drought mitigation;
 2. agricultural and food systems:
 - a. agricultural industries as economic generators;
 - b. local and regional food deserts, supply chains, distribution and processing; and
 - c. water and land access for agricultural use;

3. outdoor, tourism and cultural economies:
 - a. development of outdoor recreation and ecotourism economies;
 - b. tribal tourism and cultural enterprises; and
 - c. expansion of the creative industries;
 4. technology, film and innovation:
 - a. technology and artificial intelligence;
 - b. broadband and digital infrastructure; and
 - c. rural expansion of the film, television and digital media industries;
 5. federal, military and border economies:
 - a. the border industries and tradeports; and
 - b. economic impacts of federal and military installations and national laboratories;
- C. updates on business development and capital access, including:
1. economic development initiatives and priorities in communities around New Mexico;
 2. challenges and opportunities facing rural New Mexico industries and small businesses, including:
 - a. the gaming and tribal gaming industries;
 - b. the tourism and hospitality industry;
 - c. the restaurant, bar and food service industry;
 - d. the manufacturing industry;
 - e. the medical industry; and
 - f. the creative industries;
 3. cooperative and community ownership models in rural and tribal economies;

4. impacts of state policies, such as the use of eminent domain, prevailing wage requirements and the Environmental Improvement Board's policies on electric vehicles;

5. access to capital for small and minority-owned businesses, including through community development financial institutions, tribal lenders and credit unions;

6. opportunities for international investment opportunities in New Mexico, such as the NMexus Center; and

7. impacts of federal tariffs and opportunities for substituting foreign imports with New Mexico production;

D. reports on workforce, education and livability infrastructure, including:

1. internships, apprenticeships and workforce development programs;

2. education initiatives relating to career and technical education and business developments;

3. housing, evictions, zoning and construction;

4. child care access and its role in workforce participation and provider stability; and

5. paid family and medical leave; and

E. updates on tribal and rural economic equity, including:

1. tribal economic development, infrastructure and self-determination;

2. equity in procurement, incentives and rural-targeted programs;

3. the relationships between the economy and the environment, including water use;

4. tribal health care as a model for rural health care; and

5. the economic impact of tribal gaming.

**Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee
2025 Approved Meeting Schedule**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
June 4	Santa Fe
July 7-8	Ruidoso/Corona
August 11-12	Los Lunas
September 4-5	Farmington
October 1-2	Gallup
November 10	Santa Fe

AGENDAS AND MINUTES

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
for the
FIRST MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**June 4, 2025
State Capitol, Room 307
Santa Fe**

Wednesday, June 4

1:00 p.m. **Call to Order**
—Senator Angel M. Charley, Chair
—Representative Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair

1:30 p.m. **Introductions of Committee and Staff**

2:30 p.m. (1) **[2025 Proposed Work Plan, Meeting Schedule and Locations](#)**
—Senator Angel M. Charley, Chair

4:00 p.m. **Public Comment***

5:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

*Members of the public may make virtual public comments during the public comment period of the meeting by following the instructions under the "Virtual Public Comment" section of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee [web page](#).

**MINUTES
of the
FIRST MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**June 4, 2025
State Capitol, Room 307
Santa Fe**

The first meeting of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee was called to order by Senator Angel M. Charley, chair, on Wednesday, June 4, 2025, at 1:04 p.m. in Room 307 of the State Capitol in Santa Fe.

Present

Sen. Angel M. Charley, Chair
Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Martha Garcia
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Sen. Antonio Maestas
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Rep. Sarah Silva
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Advisory Members

Rep. Catherine J. Cullen
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Charlotte Little
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Rep. Rod Montoya
Rep. Mark B. Murphy
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen

Staff

Erin Bond, Researcher, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Sheila Keleher, Researcher, LCS
Nancy Martinez, Bill Drafter, LCS
Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, LCS

Absent

Sen. Jay C. Block
Sen. Pat Boone
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Rep. Marian Matthews
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Rep. Linda Serrato

Sen. Heather Berghmans
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Rep. Anita Gonzales
Rep. Jenifer Jones
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Raymundo Lara
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Jimmy G. Mason
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. James G. Townsend

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Copies of all handouts and written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Wednesday, June 4**Welcome and Introductions (1:04 p.m.)**

Senator Charley welcomed everyone to the meeting, and members of the committee introduced themselves and asked that members say one word that describes what each member wants out of the interim.

2025 Proposed Work Plan, Meeting Schedule and Locations (1:18 p.m.)

Members of the committee discussed and amended the proposed work plan and meeting schedule for the 2025 interim. On a motion made and seconded, and without any objections, the committee approved the proposed work plan and meeting schedule, as amended.

Public Comment (2:14 p.m.)

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:18 p.m.

Revised: July 3, 2025

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
for the
SECOND MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**July 7, 2025
Inn of the Mountain Gods
287 Carrizo Canyon Road
Mescalero**

**July 8, 2025
SunZia Project
523 Main Street
Corona**

Monday, July 7 — Mescalero

- 9:30 a.m. **Call to Order and Introductions**
—Senator Angel M. Charley, Chair
—Representative Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
- 9:45 a.m. (1) **[Welcome, the Economy of the Mescalero Apache Tribe and New Mexico](#)**
—Thora Walsh Padilla, President, Mescalero Apache Tribe
—Duane Duffy, Vice President, Mescalero Apache Tribe
—Isaac Romero, Deputy Secretary, Economic Development Department (EDD)
- 10:45 a.m. (2) **[A Community Response to a Natural Disaster](#)**
—Thora Walsh Padilla, President, Mescalero Apache Tribe
—Lynn D. Crawford, Mayor, Village of Ruidoso
—Rick Baugh, General Manager, Ruidoso Downs Racetrack
- 12:15 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:30 p.m. (3) **[Medical Memorandum of Understanding between Lincoln County and the Mescalero Apache Tribe](#)**
—Thora Walsh Padilla, President, Mescalero Apache Tribe

2:00 p.m. (4) **Economic Pathways Through Forest Restoration and Water Management**
—Elizabeth K. Anderson, State Engineer, Office of the State Engineer
—Laura McCarthy, State Forester, Forestry Division, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD)
—William Foster, Forest Markets Coordinator, Forestry Division, EMNRD
—Isaac Romero, Deputy Secretary, EDD
—Dennis Romero, Chief, Construction Programs Bureau, Water Protection Division, Department of Environment

3:15 p.m. (5) **Energy Development**
—Rebecca Puck Stair, Director, Energy Conservation and Management Division, EMNRD

4:15 p.m. **Public Comment***

4:30 p.m. **Recess**

Tuesday, July 8 — Corona

10:30 a.m. **Tour of the SunZia Project (Legislators and Staff Only)**

1:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

*Members of the public may make virtual public comments during the public comment period of the meeting by following the instructions under the "Virtual Public Comment" section of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee [web page](#).

**MINUTES
of the
SECOND MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**July 7, 2025
Inn of the Mountain Gods
287 Carrizo Canyon Road
Mescalero**

**July 8, 2025
SunZia Project
523 Main Street
Corona**

The second meeting of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee was called to order by Senator Angel M. Charley, chair, at 9:36 a.m. on July 7, 2025 at the Inn of the Mountain Gods in Mescalero.

Present

Sen. Angel M. Charley, Chair
Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair (7/7)
Rep. Gail Armstrong (7/7)
Sen. Pat Boone
Rep. Nicole Chavez (7/7)
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley (7/7)
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto (7/7)
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Rep. Linda Serrato
Rep. Martin R. Zamora (7/7)

Advisory Members

Sen. Heather Berghmans (7/8)
Rep. Catherine J. Cullen
Rep. Jenifer Jones (7/7)
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Charlotte Little
Rep. Tara L. Lujan (7/7)
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen (7/7)

Absent

Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Sen. Jay C. Block
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Martha Garcia
Sen. Antonio Maestas
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Rep. Marian Matthews
Rep. Sarah Silva
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics

Absent

Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Anita Gonzales
Rep. Raymundo Lara
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Jimmy G. Mason
Rep. Rod Montoya
Rep. Mark B. Murphy
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez
Sen. James G. Townsend

Guest Legislator

Rep. Harlan Vincent (7/7)

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Erin Bond, Researcher, Legislative Council Service (LCS)

Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, LCS

Sheila Keleher, Researcher, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Copies of all handouts and written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

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Monday, July 7 — Mescalero

Welcome, the Economy of the Mescalero Apache Tribe and New Mexico (9:36 a.m.)

Senator Charley asked members of the committee and staff to introduce themselves. Thora Walsh Padilla, president, Mescalero Apache Tribe, welcomed the committee. President Walsh Padilla and Duane Duffy, vice president, Mescalero Apache Tribe, presented an overview of major economic projects and programs currently administered by the Mescalero Apache Tribe and plans for upcoming projects and programs. Isaac Romero, deputy secretary, Economic Development Department (EDD), presented an overview of some existing economic development programs run by the EDD. He also gave an overview of the new Technology and Innovation Division of the department. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=7/7/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

A Community Response to a Natural Disaster (11:33 a.m.)

President Walsh Padilla; Lynn D. Crawford, mayor, Village of Ruidoso; and Rick Baugh, general manager, Ruidoso Downs Race Track, gave a presentation regarding the recent fires and post-fire flood events in their communities and how the Mescalero Apache Tribe and the Village of Ruidoso have responded to these natural disasters. They explored the potential ongoing risks

to those communities from future fire and flood events. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=7/7/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

Medical Memorandum of Understanding between Lincoln County and the Mescalero Apache Tribe (1:34 p.m.)

President Walsh Padilla gave an overview of the availability of medical services in the Mescalero-Lincoln County region. She also explained efforts by the Mescalero Apache Tribe to work with local governments within the region to increase the availability of non-emergency health services, such as routine health checkups.

Economic Pathways Through Forest Restoration and Water Management (1:54 p.m.)

Elizabeth K. Anderson, state engineer, Office of the State Engineer; Laura McCarthy, state forester, Forestry Division, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department (EMNRD); William Foster, forest markets coordinator, Forestry Division, EMNRD; Deputy Secretary Romero; and Dennis Romero, chief, Construction Programs Bureau, Water Protection Division, Department of Environment, discussed the potential benefits for rural economic stability of creating healthy and water-producing forests and natural landscapes. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=7/7/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

Approval of Minutes (3:49 p.m.)

Upon a motion duly made and without objection, the committee approved the minutes of the June 4, 2025 meeting.

Energy Development (3:49 p.m.)

Rebecca Puck Stair, director, Energy Conservation and Management Division, EMNRD, provided information regarding energy development programs offered by the division, particularly for renewable energy facilities and rural and tribal communities. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=7/7/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 4:38 p.m.

Tuesday, July 8 — Corona

Tour of the SunZia Project (10:00 a.m.)

Committee members and staff took a tour of the SunZia Wind and Transmission project.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m.

Revised: August 8, 2025

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
for the
THIRD MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**August 11-12, 2025
University of New Mexico-Valencia
Student Community Center
280 La Entrada Road
Los Lunas**

Monday, August 11

- 9:00 a.m. **Call to Order and Introductions**
—Senator Angel M. Charley, Chair
—Representative Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
- 9:10 a.m. (1) **[Welcome and Updates on the Local Economies](#)**
—Robert C. Noblin, Jr., Mayor, City of Belen
—Roseann Peralta, City Manager, City of Belen
—Victoria Archuleta, Senior Economic Developer, Economic Development
Division, Village of Los Lunas
—Jhonathan Aragon, County Manager, Valencia County
—Joshua Ramsell, Mayor, City of Rio Communities
—Martin Moore, City Manager, City of Rio Communities
- 10:00 a.m. (2) **[Workforce Training Collaboration](#)**
—Samuel Dosumu, Ph.D., Chancellor, University of New Mexico-Valencia
—Tracy Hartzler, President, Central New Mexico Community College
(CNM)
—Steven Saucedo, Vice President for Workforce Development, New
Mexico Junior College
—Randy Krall, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Telemetry Insight
—Arjun Bhakta, Internet of Things Director, Telemetry Insight; Former
CNM Learner
- 11:30 a.m. (3) **[Report from the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion \(OBAE\)](#)**
—Jeff Lopez, Director, OBAE
- 12:00 noon **Lunch**

- 1:00 p.m. (4) [Introduction to the NMexus Center](#)
—Melinda Allen, President and CEO, New Mexico Partnership
—Amar Vakil, Executive Director, NMexus Center
- 1:30 p.m. (5) [Geothermal Energy in New Mexico](#)
—Tom Solomon, Electrical Engineer and Facilitator, Geothermal
Development Working Group; Co-Coordinator, 350 New Mexico
—Logan Stephens, Vice President and Head of Development, XGS Energy
—Shari Kelley, Ph.D., Senior Geophysicist and Field Geologist, Bureau of
Geology and Mineral Resources, New Mexico Institute of Mining and
Technology
—Jackson Grimes, Director of Global Engagement, Project Innerspace
- 2:30 p.m. (6) [Aquifer Mapping and Monitoring](#)
—Stacy Timmons, Associate Director, Hydrogeology Programs, Bureau of
Geology and Mineral Resources, New Mexico Institute of Mining and
Technology
- 3:15 p.m. (7) [Surface and Ground Water Use](#)
—Linda Guenley, Member, Valencia Water Watchers
—Maurice Hall, Ph.D., P.E., Senior Advisor, Climate Resilient Water
Systems, Environmental Defense Fund

4:00 p.m. **Public Comment***

4:30 p.m. **Recess**

Tuesday, August 12

9:00 a.m. **Reconvene**

- 9:05 a.m. (8) [Battery-Charged Fences and Security System Use by Businesses](#)
—Representative Linda Serrato
—Luis Farias, Government Relations Director, AMAROK Security

- 9:30 a.m. (9) [Economic Impact of Spaceport America](#)
—Scott McLaughlin, Executive Director, Spaceport Authority
—Francisco Pallares, D.E.D., Director of Business Development, Spaceport
Authority
—Chris Erickson, Ph.D., Director, Center for Border Economic
Development, New Mexico State University (NMSU)
—Lucinda Vargas, Ph.D., Associate Director, Center for Border Economic
Development, NMSU

10:30 a.m. (10) **Zoning Policy and Housing Affordability**
—Alex Horowitz, Project Director, Housing Policy, The Pew Charitable
Trusts (Remote)

11:00 a.m. **Tour of Meta (Legislators and Staff Only)**

1:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

*Members of the public may make virtual public comments during the public comment period of the meeting by following the instructions under the "Additional Information" section of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee [web page](#).

**MINUTES
of the
THIRD MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**August 11-12, 2025
University of New Mexico-Valencia
Student Community Center
280 La Entrada Road
Los Lunas**

The third meeting of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee was called to order by Representative Doreen Y. Gallegos, vice chair, at 9:11 a.m. on August 11, 2025 at the Student Community Center at the University of New Mexico (UNM)-Valencia in Los Lunas.

Present

Sen. Angel M. Charley, Chair
Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Jay C. Block (8/12)
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. Martha Garcia
Sen. Antonio Maestas (8/12)
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Rep. Marian Matthews
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto (8/11)
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Absent

Sen. Pat Boone
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Rep. Linda Serrato
Rep. Sarah Silva

Advisory Members

Rep. Catherine J. Cullen
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Rep. Anita Gonzales (8/11)
Rep. Jenifer Jones (8/11)
Rep. Charlotte Little
Rep. Tara L. Lujan (8/11)
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom (8/11)
Rep. Rod Montoya
Rep. Mark B. Murphy (8/11)
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez (8/11)
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen (8/11)

Sen. Heather Berghmans
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Raymundo Lara
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Jimmy G. Mason
Sen. James G. Townsend

Guest Legislator

Sen. Linda M. López (8/11)

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Erin Bond, Researcher, Legislative Council Service (LCS)

Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, LCS

Sheila Keleher, Researcher, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Minutes Approval

The minutes for this meeting have not been approved by the committee.

Handouts

Copies of all handouts and written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Monday, August 11**Welcome and Introductions (9:11 a.m.)**

Representative Gallegos welcomed everyone to the meeting, and members of the committee and staff introduced themselves.

Welcome and Updates on the Local Economies (9:17 a.m.)

Victoria Archuleta, senior economic developer, Economic Development Division, Village of Los Lunas, welcomed legislators and gave an overview of the rapid economic growth happening in Los Lunas, with the Meta data center being one of the driving forces. Ms. Archuleta outlined some of the major infrastructure projects, including the Interstate 25 interchange and Los Lunas boulevard project, to address traffic flow and congestion in the area. Martin Moore, city manager, City of Rio Communities, and Lawrence Gordon, mayor pro tem, City of Rio Communities, discussed opportunities being created to attract small businesses to the area as well as current capital investment projects and the ongoing challenges establishing water and sewage infrastructure. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

Workforce Training Collaboration (10:07 a.m.)

Samuel Dosumu, Ph.D., chancellor, UNM-Valencia, welcomed the committee to the UNM-Valencia campus and spoke about the branch campus' Workforce Training Center, which has partnerships with the business community and school districts and offers professional certifications in various trades. Tracy Hartzler, president, Central New Mexico Community College, gave an overview of the workforce training programs that tie in with statewide and regional economical development plans. Steven Saucedo, vice president for workforce development, New Mexico Junior College, addressed the Government Results and Opportunity Program Fund and how it has removed many of the cost barriers for workforce training programs. Randy Krall, chief executive officer (CEO), Telemetry Insight, and Arjun Bhakta, internet of things director, Telemetry Insight, explained how the data analytics company serves oil and gas companies by providing a remote monitoring device for wells to collect data and analyses, contributing to higher production. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

Report from the Office of Broadband Access and Expansion (OBAE) (11:38 a.m.)

Jeff Lopez, director, OBAE, presented an update on broadband access and rural development across the state. Mr. Lopez reviewed federal programs and state funding, as well as the Statewide Education Network, which supports the installation and maintenance of critical education technology infrastructure. He noted that the United States Department of Commerce terminated the OBAE's legal grant agreement for \$8.7 million, which would have supported digital equity, digital literacy and digital opportunity, in May of 2025. As a result, the state now faces the challenge of finding alternate funding sources. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

Introduction to the NMexus Center (1:06 p.m.)

Melinda Allen, president and CEO, New Mexico Partnership, and Amar Vakil, executive director, NMexus Center, outlined the goals for global business expansion in New Mexico through public-private partnership. Acting as an incubator, an accelerator and a launching pad for job creation and innovation, the NMexus Center serves as a unique model for foreign direct investment. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

Geothermal Energy in New Mexico (1:54 p.m.)

Tom Solomon, electrical engineer and facilitator, Geothermal Development Working Group, and co-coordinator, 350 New Mexico, presented an overview of geothermal energy, noting that New Mexico is rated sixth in the country for geothermal potential. Mr. Solomon outlined the legislative and funding goals of the working group in promoting long-term development of advanced geothermal electricity. Logan Stephens, vice president and head of

development, XGS Energy, gave a brief description of the advanced geothermal and technological work the company does, using oil and gas industry practices to access hot dry rock. Shari Kelley, Ph.D., senior geophysicist and field geologist, Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources (NMBGMR), New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology (NMIMT), addressed the June 2025 report on "The Future of Geothermal in New Mexico" published by Project InnerSpace, in collaboration with the NMIMT and the NMBGMR. The report outlines how New Mexico, given its abundant geothermal resources, has the potential to be at the forefront of the global geothermal transition to cleaner energy. Jackson Grimes, director of global engagement, Project Innerspace, discussed some of the initiatives being brought forth, including geomap tools, state reports and plans to leverage oil and gas technology and infrastructure. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

Aquifer Mapping and Monitoring (3:01 p.m.)

Stacy Timmons, associate director, Hydrogeology Programs, NMBGMR, NMIMT, gave an overview of the aquifer mapping and monitoring program, the water data initiative and the water education program. The impact of climate change on New Mexico's water resources was also addressed. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=6>.

Surface and Ground Water Use (3:49 p.m.)

Linda Guenley, member, Valencia Water Watchers, discussed the fact that the Rio Grande has run dry again in Albuquerque and Belen, leaving farmers without irrigation water. The Valencia Water Watchers recommend that legislators fund regional water councils, as well as aquifer mapping and water data initiatives. Maurice Hall, Ph.D., P.E., senior advisor, Climate Resilient Water Systems, Environmental Defense Fund, addressed the importance of ground water for rural communities, given that it is the only source of water for communities outside the major river corridors. Dr. Hall emphasized the critical need for proactive approaches to ground water management since ground water resources across the state are being threatened by persistent drought and increasing temperatures. Dr. Hall also encouraged legislative recommendations to prepare for water resilience and long-term water security in the state. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=7>.

Public Comment (4:17 pm.)

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 4:18 p.m.

Tuesday, August 12

Reconvene

The meeting reconvened at 9:09 a.m.

Battery-Charged Fences and Security System Use by Businesses (9:10 a.m.)

Representative Martinez and Luis Farias, government relations director, AMAROK Security, addressed the need for a standard permitting process for businesses to install security systems to deter commercial property crime. Mr. Farias gave a brief description of AMAROK's battery-charged perimeter security fencing and the technology behind it. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=8>.

Approval of Minutes (9:37 a.m.)

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, and without any objections, the committee approved the minutes of the July 7-8, 2025 meeting.

Economic Impact of Spaceport America (9:37 a.m.)

Scott McLaughlin, executive director, Spaceport Authority, and Francisco Pallares, D.E.D., director of business development, Spaceport Authority, presented an overview and update on the status of the Spaceport, along with Virgin Galactic activities and operations. Discussion also focused on current projects, business development and future goals to maximize the economic impact of space tourism flights. Lucinda Vargas, Ph.D., associate director, Center for Border Economic Development, New Mexico State University (NMSU), and Chris Erickson, Ph.D., director, Center for Border Economic Development, NMSU, discussed the economic impacts of Spaceport America for Doña Ana and Sierra counties and the state. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=9>.

Zoning Policy and Housing Affordability (10:41 a.m.)

Alex Horowitz, project director, Housing Policy Initiative, The Pew Charitable Trusts, addressed New Mexico's housing shortage and how the state's rental costs have increased by 58% since 2017, outpacing the 29% national increase. Mr. Horowitz noted that the state's housing inventory is currently one-half of its 2018 level, resulting in an increase in the median costs of homes and contributing to unaffordable rental costs and increasing homelessness. Mr. Horowitz also noted that many states have passed legislation to remove regulatory barriers, including reforming building codes and zoning restrictions, which has resulted in an increase in

housing inventory. In comparison, New Mexico has not passed legislation that would address the severe housing crisis in the state. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=8/11/2025&ItemNumber=10>.

Tour of Meta (12:00 noon)

Members of the committee and staff toured Meta's Los Lunas Data Center.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Revised: September 3, 2025

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
for the
FOURTH MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**September 4, 2025
San Juan College
School of Energy, Merrion Room
5301 College Boulevard
Farmington**

Thursday, September 4

- 9:30 a.m. **Call to Order and Introductions**
—Senator Angel M. Charley, Chair
—Representative Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
- 9:40 a.m. (1) **Welcome and Updates on the Local Economies**
—Nate Duckett, Mayor, City of Farmington
—TBD, City of Aztec (invited)
—Kara Wood, Town of Kirtland Representative, Four Corners Economic
Development
—Cynthia Atencio, Mayor, City of Bloomfield
—Mike Stark, County Manager, San Juan County
- 10:45 a.m. (2) **Update from San Juan College**
—Toni Hopper Pendergrass, Ph.D., President, San Juan College
- 11:15 a.m. (3) **Strengthening New Mexico's Economy Through Survivor-Centered
Policies**
—Cynthia Amezcua Zamudio, State Policy and Advocacy Manager,
FreeFrom (remote)
—MaryEllen Garcia, Chief Executive Officer, The New Mexico Coalition
Against Domestic Violence (remote)
—Alexandria Taylor, Executive Director, New Mexico Coalition of Sexual
Assault Programs, Inc.
- 12:00 noon **Lunch**
- 1:00 p.m. (4) **Creative and Cultural Industries of New Mexico**
—Michelle Laflamme-Childs, Executive Director, Arts Division, Cultural
Affairs Department
—Lancing Adams, Acting Secretary, Tourism Department
—Shani Harvie, Director, Creative Industries Division, Economic
Development Department (EDD)

2:15 p.m. (5) **Update on New Mexico State Parks**
—Toby Velasquez, Director, State Parks Division, Energy, Minerals and
Natural Resources Department
—Kramer Winingham, D.E.D., Program Director, Arrowhead Center, New
Mexico State University

3:15 p.m. (6) **Agriculture and Food Systems**
—Jason New, Director, Marketing and Development Division, New Mexico
Department of Agriculture (remote)
—Erin Ortigoza, Manager, Food, Hunger and Agriculture Program, EDD
(remote)
—Jacqueline Montoya, Project Manager, Harvest Food Hub and Kitchen,
San Juan College
—Perla Gething, Associate Director, Economic Council Helping Others,
Inc. (ECHO Inc.)
—Tami Jenkins, Director, ECHO Inc. Food Bank

4:15 p.m. **Public Comment***

4:30 p.m. **Adjourn**

*Members of the public may make virtual public comments during the public comment period of the meeting by following the instructions under the "Additional Information" section of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee [web page](#).

**MINUTES
of the
FOURTH MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**September 4, 2025
San Juan College
School of Energy, Merrion Room
5301 College Boulevard
Farmington**

The fourth meeting of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee was called to order by Senator Angel M. Charley, chair, at 9:38 a.m. on September 4, 2025 in the Merrion Room of the School of Energy at San Juan College in Farmington.

Present

Sen. Angel M. Charley, Chair
Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Sen. Jay C. Block
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto

Absent

Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Pat Boone
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. Martha Garcia
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Sen. Antonio Maestas
Rep. Marian Matthews
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Rep. Linda Serrato
Rep. Sarah Silva
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Advisory Members

Rep. Jenifer Jones
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Rod Montoya
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen

Sen. Heather Berghmans
Rep. Catherine J. Cullen
Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Anita Gonzales
Rep. Raymundo Lara
Rep. Charlotte Little
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Jimmy G. Mason

Rep. Mark B. Murphy
Sen. James G. Townsend

Guest Legislators

Rep. Mark Duncan
Rep. Andrea Romero

Staff

Erin Bond, Researcher, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Nancy Martinez, Bill Drafter, LCS
Sheila Keleher, Researcher, LCS

Minutes Approval

The minutes for this meeting have not been approved by the committee.

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Welcome and Introductions (9:38 a.m.)

Senator Charley welcomed everyone to the meeting, and members of the committee introduced themselves.

Welcome and Updates on the Local Economies (9:45 a.m.)

Nate Duckett, mayor, City of Farmington, and Warren Unsicker, director, Economic Development, City of Farmington, highlighted the strategic priorities and needs of the City of Farmington. In addition, Mr. Duckett gave an overview of upcoming major construction projects and the major construction projects that have been completed thus far.

Andrew DiCamillo, director, Community Development, City of Aztec, spoke about the arterial project around the City of Aztec to help with the flow of traffic and bring economic growth. He noted that there are other projects in place to make efforts to incentivize public-private partnerships to attract businesses, specifically retail shops, to the City of Aztec.

Mike Stark, county manager, San Juan County, said that a five-year strategic plan was developed at a time when the San Juan Generating Station closed down and emphasized the economic hardships that the community has faced.

Cynthia Atencio, mayor, City of Bloomfield, mentioned new retail establishments coming to the City of Bloomfield and noted that the city has a chamber of commerce. She also stated that the city has been in communication with the San Juan Water Commission for the purchase of land for the purpose of a water reservoir.

Kara Wood, Town of Kirtland representative, Four Corners Economic Development, said that prior to 2015, the community was unincorporated and decided to incorporate, as infrastructure and funding were unavailable. Infrastructure continues to be a huge need, specifically for broadband. She stated that the largest employer of the Town of Kirtland is the Central Consolidated School District and that the closure of the San Juan Generating Station had a huge financial impact on the town. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=9/4/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

Update from San Juan College (11:32 a.m.)

Toni Hopper Pendergrass, Ph.D., president, San Juan College, introduced Alicia Corbell, dean, School of Energy, San Juan College and gave an overview of programs and community partnerships offered at San Juan College. She discussed facility upgrades on the campus and the challenges related to the need for student housing. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=9/4/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

Strengthening New Mexico's Economy Through Survivor-Centered Policies (12:19 p.m.)

Cynthia Amezcua Zamudio, state policy and advocacy manager, FreeFrom; Alexandria Taylor, executive director, New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.; and MaryEllen Garcia, chief executive officer, The New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence, gave a presentation on economic justice and sustainability. Ms. Zamudio said that 73% of survivors of gender-based violence reported losing a job or income. Ms. Taylor gave an overview of the *New Mexico Crime Victimization Report* and stated that 67% reported that being unhoused is a major risk factor for experiencing violence. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=9/4/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

Creative and Cultural Industries of New Mexico (1:17 p.m.)

Shani Harvie, director, Creative Industries Division, Economic Development Department (EDD), shared that the mission of the EDD is to enhance economic opportunities for New

Mexico families by nurturing a vibrant, creative economy. She also talked about upcoming grants to support organizations with creative entrepreneurs and returning and enhanced programs for existing creative businesses.

Michelle Laflamme-Childs, executive director, Arts Division, Cultural Affairs Department, said that New Mexico Arts is the smallest division of the largest historic preservation division. She noted that the Arts Division, with support from statewide, regional and national partners, continues to serve New Mexico residents in rural communities.

Lancing Adams, acting secretary, Tourism Department, gave a presentation on the economic impact of tourism. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been significant economic growth. Over the past 13 years, the New Mexico True campaign has seen sustained success, averaging 40 million annual visits and \$7.75 billion in visitor spending over the last five years. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=9/4/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

Update on New Mexico State Parks (2:32 p.m.)

Toby Velasquez, director, State Parks Division, Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, and Kramer Winingham, D.E.D., program director, Arrowhead Center, New Mexico State University, gave a presentation on the economic impact of state parks for fiscal years 2019-2024. Dr. Winingham stated that the report identified visitor spending and park-related expenditures as the two main economic benefits of New Mexico state parks. The benefits were evaluated using economic impact analysis and economic contribution analysis. Mr. Velasquez talked about the state park general fund and the expenditure contribution. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=9/4/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

Agriculture and Food Systems (3:20 p.m.)

Jason New, director, Marketing and Development Division, New Mexico Department of Agriculture, gave a presentation on the meat value chain coordination and the New Mexico livestock industry.

Erin Ortigoza, manager, Food, Hunger and Agriculture Program, EDD, discussed focus areas for fiscal year 2026. She said that the Food, Hunger and Agriculture Program is designed to support the intersection of economic development in New Mexico's food and agricultural sector with increased food security for New Mexico residents.

Perla Gethering, associate director, Economic Council Helping Others, Inc. (ECHO Inc.), introduced Tami Jenkins, director, ECHO Inc. Food Bank, said that ECHO Inc.'s mission is to provide resources and education to individuals and families to improve their lives, specifically in

San Juan County. The emergency program provides both financial and practical assistance to help residents navigate difficult times. Ms. Jenkins said that if the federal Community Services Block Grant budget is cut, it will impact programs and activities that help alleviate hardships in communities across the state.

Jaqueline Montoya, project manager, Harvest Food Hub and Kitchen, San Juan College, said that the Harvest Food Hub and Kitchen's mission is to grow and sustain the capacity of food systems and have a positive impact on the economy. She said that there are 115 businesses supported through food and farm safety training, allowing for sales to institutions and food banks. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=9/4/2025&ItemNumber=6>.

Public Comment (4:27 p.m.)

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Revised: December 5, 2025

**TENTATIVE AGENDA
for the
FIFTH MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**December 8, 2025
State Capitol, Room 322
Santa Fe**

Monday, December 8

- 9:30 a.m. **Call to Order and Introductions**
—Senator Angel M. Charley, Chair
—Representative Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
- 9:35 a.m. (1) **New Mexico Grocers Association**
—Henry Sandoval, Executive Director, New Mexico Grocers Association
- 10:00 a.m. (2) **Trade Ports in New Mexico**
—Charles Remkes, P.E., Manager, Intelligent Transportation Systems
—Marcos A. Gonzales, Executive Development Officer, Economic
Development, Bernalillo County
—Carolyn Tobias, Economic Development Manager, Economic
Development, Bernalillo County
—Martin O'Malley, General Manager, Gallup Land Partners
—Frank Chiapetti, City Manager, City of Gallup
—Anthony Dimas, County Manager, McKinley County
—Robert Baca, County Commissioner, District Three, McKinley County
- 11:15 a.m. (3) **Housing, Short-Term Rentals and Economic Development**
—Robyn Powell, Senior Director of Policy and Planning, New Mexico
Mortgage Finance Authority
—Carl Vidal, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Irvie Homes
—David Saavedra, CEO, New Mexico Association of Realtors
—Isaiah Romero, President, County Assessors' Affiliate; County Assessor,
Santa Fe County
- 12:00 noon **Public Comment***
- 12:10 p.m. **Lunch**
- 1:00 p.m. (4) **Libraries' Role in Rural New Mexico**
—Shel Neymark, Executive Director, New Mexico Rural Library Initiative
—Aspen Coriz-Romero, Fellow, New Mexico Rural Library Initiative

- 1:45 p.m. (5) **[New Mexico Food Banks](#)**
—Jill Dixon, Executive Director, The Food Depot
—Katy Anderson, Vice President, Strategy, Partnerships and Advocacy,
Roadrunner Food Bank
- 2:30 p.m. (6) **[Rural Chambers of Commerce](#)**
—Jessica Bollema, Executive Director, Artesia Chamber of Commerce
—Hayley Klein, City Administrator, City of Artesia
—Bill Lee, CEO, Gallup-McKinley County Chamber of Commerce
- 3:15 p.m. (7) **[Consideration of Legislation for Endorsement](#)**
—Committee Members
- 4:00 p.m. **Adjourn**

*Members of the public may make virtual public comments during the public comment period of the meeting by following the instructions under the "Additional Information" section of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee [web page](#).

If you have a disability and require assistance with accessing a meeting, please [click here](#) to request a reasonable accommodation. You may also call Robin Garrison at (505) 986-4685 or email ada.assist@nmlegis.gov. Please help us prepare your accommodation by submitting your request at least three (3) business days prior to the meeting or as soon as possible. Requests made with less than a 24-hour notice cannot be guaranteed.

**MINUTES
of the
FIFTH MEETING
of the
ECONOMIC AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND POLICY COMMITTEE**

**December 8, 2025
State Capitol, Room 322
Santa Fe**

The fifth meeting of the Economic and Rural Development and Policy Committee was called to order by Senator Angel M. Charley, chair, at 9:32 a.m. on December 8, 2025 in Room 322 of the State Capitol in Santa Fe.

Present

Sen. Angel M. Charley, Chair
Sen. Pat Boone
Rep. Martha Garcia
Sen. Antonio Maestas
Rep. Marian Matthews
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Rep. Sarah Silva
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics

Advisory Members

Sen. Heather Berghmans
Rep. Catherine J. Cullen
Sen. David M. Gallegos

Absent

Rep. Doreen Y. Gallegos, Vice Chair
Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Jay C. Block
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Rep. Linda Serrato
Rep. Martin R. Zamora

Rep. Meredith A. Dixon
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Rep. Anita Gonzales
Rep. Jenifer Jones
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Raymundo Lara
Rep. Charlotte Little
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Rep. Patricia A. Lundstrom
Rep. Jimmy G. Mason
Rep. Rod Montoya
Rep. Mark B. Murphy
Sen. Joshua A. Sanchez
Sen. William E. Sharer
Sen. Nicole Tobiassen
Sen. James G. Townsend

Staff

Erin Bond, Researcher, Legislative Council Service (LCS)

Nancy Martinez, Bill Drafter, LCS

Gabriel Suazo, Intern, LCS

Minutes Approval

Because the committee will not meet again this year, the minutes for this meeting have not been officially approved by the committee.

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Monday, December 8**Welcome and Introductions (9:32 a.m.)**

Senator Charley welcomed everyone to the meeting, and members of the committee introduced themselves.

New Mexico Grocers Association (9:37 a.m.)

Henry Sandoval, executive director, New Mexico Grocers Association, introduced Ryan Doyle, owner, Intrepid Wholesale, LLC, and Breck Stewart, member, Executive Board, New Mexico Grocers Association, and emphasized how crime has impacted grocers in New Mexico, particularly in rural communities. They said that with limited resources in food supply and an increase in retail theft, many grocers have been forced to hire private security, which further increases grocery prices for consumers. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

Trade Ports in New Mexico (10:33 a.m.)

Charles Remkes, P.E., manager, Intelligent Transportation Systems, Department of Transportation, said that both domestic and international freight logistics have grown more complex. Marcos A. Gonzales, M.B.A., executive development officer, Economic Development, Bernalillo County, said that the Interstate 40 TradePort Corridor anticipates

creating 60,000 new jobs in New Mexico and Arizona hubs. Anthony Dimas, county manager, McKinley County, said that the Gallup-McKinley TradePort is a collaborative public-private effort among the Greater Gallup Economic Development Corporation, the City of Gallup and McKinley County. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

Housing, Short-Term Rentals and Economic Development (11:31 a.m.)

Robyn Powell, senior director of policy and planning, New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority, said that Housing New Mexico's mission is to create more housing, preserve and improve existing housing, create homeownership opportunities and create stable housing environments. Carl Vidal, chief executive officer, Irvie Homes, said that short-term rentals face the challenge of tax assessments and classifying homes as nonresidential. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Libraries' Role in Rural New Mexico (1:04 p.m.)

Shel Neymark, executive director, New Mexico Rural Library Initiative, introduced Aspen Coriz-Romero, fellow, New Mexico Rural Library Initiative, and said that rural libraries are often the only infrastructure in the towns that they are in and that aside from providing library services, they tend to provide early childhood education, after-school programs, adult education and economic development. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

New Mexico Food Banks (1:56 p.m.)

Jill Dixon, executive director, The Food Depot, introduced Katy Anderson, vice president, Strategy, Partnerships and Advocacy, Roadrunner Food Bank, and said that there are over 500 distribution sites and food access in all 33 counties in New Mexico. Ms. Anderson explained that the healthy corner store model is an approach in which convenience stores are supported in offering a wider range of nutritious food options and that the goal of this model is to expand healthy food access in neighborhoods where larger, traditional retail stores may struggle to operate or reach consistently. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

Rural Chambers of Commerce (2:25 p.m.)

Bill Lee, chief executive officer, Gallup-McKinley County Chamber of Commerce; Jessica Bollema, executive director, Artesia Chamber of Commerce; and Hayley Klein, city administrator, City of Artesia, spoke on challenges that the City of Artesia, the City of Gallup and McKinley County face, as well as the areas' strengths. Mr. Lee noted that the City of Gallup continues to rank high in crime statistics, with repeat offenders cycling in and out of the criminal justice system and repeatedly targeting the same businesses. He also highlighted threats to the medical field, including ongoing issues with medical malpractice statutes, which have contributed to a shortage of medical providers and have placed additional strain on rural communities in New Mexico. Ms. Bollema said that the City of Artesia prides itself on its high school football team and its geographical accessibility to other towns in the southeastern part of the state. Ms. Klein discussed staffing shortages and broader health care concerns that are prompting many residents to seek medical care in neighboring states.

Consideration of Legislation for Endorsement (2:51 p.m.)

The committee discussed legislation for endorsement, but the legislation was not endorsed. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=ERDPC&Date=12/8/2025&ItemNumber=7>.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.



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