HOUSE RESOLUTION 1

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026

INTRODUCED BY

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A RESOLUTION

CREATING AND EMPOWERING A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY
AND PUBLIC CORRUPTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF SECURING INFORMATION
TO DETERMINE WHETHER LEGISLATION OR OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTION IS
NECESSARY TO PROVIDE FOR SAFETY AND WELFARE OR TO PROVIDE FOR
PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN STATE GOVERNMENT.

WHEREAS, "Zorro ranch" was the name of a private estate
located in Santa Fe county consisting of approximately ten
thousand acres of real property, which included public land
leaseholds; and

WHEREAS, Zorro ranch and the persons who owned Zorro ranch
between 1993 and 2023 have been the subjects of great public
concern since at least 2019; however, previous legislatures
have not responded to this great public concern; and

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1   WHEREAS, members of the house of representatives reported

2   to the interim courts, corrections and justice committee about

3   allegations the members received that Zorro ranch was an

4   instrumentality of serious criminal activity that was not

5   investigated, prosecuted or otherwise acted upon by state or

6   local officers before potential investigations, prosecutions or

7   other actions were time barred pursuant to state law; and

8   WHEREAS, the house of representatives is concerned that

9   the failure to investigate the alleged criminal activity at

10 Zorro ranch and the risk of potential consequences of that

11 activity continue to affect the safety and welfare of the state

12 and that continued legislative inaction threatens public

13 confidence in state government; and

14   WHEREAS, Article 4, Section 2 of the constitution of New

15 Mexico vests the legislature with all powers necessary to the

16 legislature of a free state, which include the indispensable

17 power of inquiry, through which either chamber of the

18 legislature may conduct investigative procedures to secure

19 information necessary to legislate, to provide general

20 oversight of the administration of government, the expenditure

21 of public money and the use of public resources and to exercise

22 particular enumerated powers and duties; and

23   WHEREAS, as an example of the particular enumerated powers

24 and duties of the legislature, Article 4, Section 35 of the

25 constitution of New Mexico vests the house of representatives

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1   with the sole power of impeachment, which confers a unique duty

2   to oversee the conduct of state officers and compels the

3   investigation of allegations of misconduct; and

4   WHEREAS, with each chamber of the legislature having the

5   power to determine the rules for the chamber's own procedures

6   in accordance with Article 4, Section 11 of the constitution of

7   New Mexico, it is for the house of representatives to decide

8   whether to exercise the power of inquiry, the time and place at

9   which the power will be exercised and the manner in which the

10 power will be exercised;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

12 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the speaker

13 appoint a special committee of the house of representatives

14 consisting of two members from the majority party and two

15 members from the minority party and designate a chair from

16 among the appointed members, and that the committee investigate

17 Zorro ranch and the related allegations of criminal activity to

18 determine whether legislation or other legislative action is

19 needed to:

20   A.   prevent and properly punish crime;

21   B.   protect children and other vulnerable persons;

22   C.   establish sufficient procedures for securing

23 civil justice;

24   D.   ensure proper use and stewardship of public

25 money and resources; and

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1   E.   provide for public accountability; and

2   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee be vested with

3   all necessary powers and process, including the powers to

4   conduct hearings, compel the attendance of witnesses,

5   administer oaths and issue subpoenas, and that the committee be

6   authorized to function after the legislature adjourns *sine die*;

7   provided that the committee shall not function after December

8   31, 2026; and provided further that process for the committee

9   shall be issued by the chair and, while the legislature is in

10   session, such process shall be served by the sergeant-at-arms

11   and enforced by the house of representatives and, after the

12   legislature adjourns, such process shall be enforced in any

13   court with jurisdiction over the process and shall be in

14   compliance with the applicable rules of the court; and

15   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chief clerk of the house

16   of representatives provide staff for the committee while the

17   legislature is in session and that the legislative council

18   service be requested to provide staff for the committee after

19   the legislature adjourns but, subject to the availability of

20   funding, the committee may retain additional staff, including

21   legal counsel, during the time the committee is properly

22   functioning; and

23   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee keep records of

24   its work, furnish an interim report to the leadership of the

25   house of representatives on or before July 31, 2026 and furnish

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1   a final report to all members of the house of representatives

2   on or before December 31, 2026 that includes a description of

3   the investigative procedures carried out by the committee, the

4   findings and conclusions the committee made through carrying

5   out those procedures and the committee's recommendations; and

6   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be

7   transmitted to the chief clerk of the house of representatives,

8   the president pro tempore of the senate, the New Mexico

9   legislative council and the director of the legislative council

10 service.

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