

1 A RESOLUTION

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

9  
10 WHEREAS, "Zorro ranch" was the name of a private estate  
11 located in Santa Fe county consisting of approximately ten  
12 thousand acres of real property, which included public land  
13 leaseholds; and

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

19 WHEREAS, members of the house of representatives  
20 reported to the interim courts, corrections and justice  
21 committee about allegations the members received that Zorro  
22 ranch was an instrumentality of serious criminal activity  
23 that was not investigated, prosecuted or otherwise acted upon  
24 by state or local officers before potential investigations,  
25 prosecutions or other actions were time barred pursuant to

1 state law; and

2 WHEREAS, the house of representatives is concerned that  
3 the failure to investigate the alleged criminal activity at  
4 Zorro ranch and the risk of potential consequences of that  
5 activity continue to affect the safety and welfare of the  
6 state and that continued legislative inaction threatens  
7 public confidence in state government; and

8 WHEREAS, Article 4, Section 2 of the constitution of New  
9 Mexico vests the legislature with all powers necessary to the  
10 legislature of a free state, which include the indispensable  
11 power of inquiry, through which either chamber of the  
12 legislature may conduct investigative procedures to secure  
13 information necessary to legislate, to provide general  
14 oversight of the administration of government, the  
15 expenditure of public money and the use of public resources  
16 and to exercise particular enumerated powers and duties; and

17 WHEREAS, as an example of the particular enumerated  
18 powers and duties of the legislature, Article 4, Section 35  
19 of the constitution of New Mexico vests the house of  
20 representatives with the sole power of impeachment, which  
21 confers a unique duty to oversee the conduct of state  
22 officers and compels the investigation of allegations of  
23 misconduct; and

24 WHEREAS, with each chamber of the legislature having the  
25 power to determine the rules for the chamber's own procedures

1 in accordance with Article 4, Section 11 of the constitution  
2 of New Mexico, it is for the house of representatives to  
3 decide whether to exercise the power of inquiry, the time and  
4 place at which the power will be exercised and the manner in  
5 which the power will be exercised;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
7 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the speaker  
8 appoint a special committee of the house of representatives  
9 consisting of two members from the majority party and two  
10 members from the minority party and designate a chair from  
11 among the appointed members, and that the committee  
12 investigate Zorro ranch and the related allegations of  
13 criminal activity to determine whether legislation or other  
14 legislative action is needed to:

- 15 A. prevent and properly punish crime;
- 16 B. protect children and other vulnerable persons;
- 17 C. establish sufficient procedures for securing  
18 civil justice;
- 19 D. ensure proper use and stewardship of public  
20 money and resources; and
- 21 E. provide for public accountability; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee be vested with  
23 all necessary powers and process, including the powers to  
24 conduct hearings, compel the attendance of witnesses,  
25 administer oaths and issue subpoenas, and that the committee

1 be authorized to function after the legislature adjourns *sine*  
2 *die*; provided that the committee shall not function after  
3 December 31, 2026; and provided further that process for the  
4 committee shall be issued by the chair and, while the  
5 legislature is in session, such process shall be served by  
6 the sergeant-at-arms and enforced by the house of  
7 representatives and, after the legislature adjourns, such  
8 process shall be enforced in any court with jurisdiction over  
9 the process and shall be in compliance with the applicable  
10 rules of the court; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chief clerk of the house  
12 of representatives provide staff for the committee while the  
13 legislature is in session and that the legislative council  
14 service be requested to provide staff for the committee after  
15 the legislature adjourns but, subject to the availability of  
16 funding, the committee may retain additional staff, including  
17 legal counsel, during the time the committee is properly  
18 functioning; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee keep records  
20 of its work, furnish an interim report to the leadership of  
21 the house of representatives on or before July 31, 2026 and  
22 furnish a final report to all members of the house of  
23 representatives on or before December 31, 2026 that includes  
24 a description of the investigative procedures carried out by  
25 the committee, the findings and conclusions the committee

1 made through carrying out those procedures and the  
2 committee's recommendations; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be  
4 transmitted to the chief clerk of the house of  
5 representatives, the president pro tempore of the senate, the  
6 New Mexico legislative council and the director of the  
7 legislative council service.

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