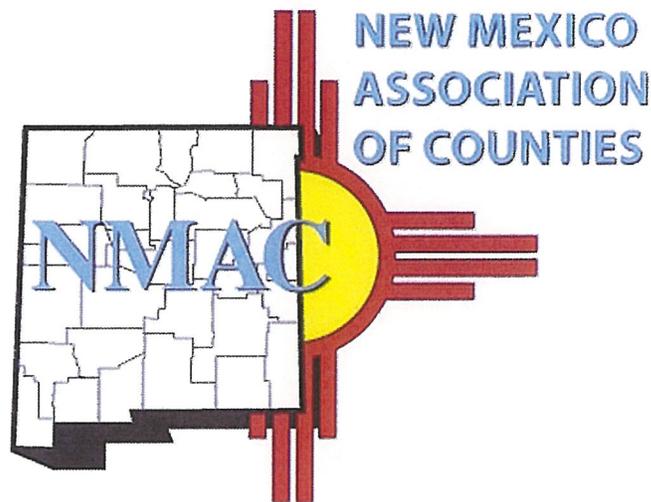


Economic & Rural Development Committee



New Mexico Association of Counties

**Bill Sauble, Colfax County Commissioner
Michael Gallagher, Lea County Manager
Brian Moore, Lobbyist**

November 24, 2014

NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Commissioners AFFILIATE, RESOLUTION # I

1. Short Title or Subject	Maintain Southwest Chief Amtrak Service
2. Affected Affiliates	Commissioners, managers
3. Impact on County Revenues/Finance	Loss of \$29.3 million in direct economic benefits
4. Legislation Resolution or Policy Statement Or Resolution for Congressional Delegation	Legislation Resolution and resolution for congressional support
5. Requested as NMAC Legislative Priority	yes

WHEREAS, Amtrak's Southwest Chief serves northern New Mexico on its route between Chicago and Los Angeles on the host railroad line of Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF); and

WHEREAS, Fiscal Year 2012 revealed a total of 34,444 Amtrak boarding's and alighting's among the Raton, Las Vegas, and Lamy stations; and

WHEREAS, a Report of the Annual Economic Impact of Amtrak's Southwest Chief in New Mexico, dated November 11, 2013 and filed with the NM Interim Transportation Infrastructure Sub-Committee on November 12, 2013 assesses the annual visitor spending impact in the Lamy-Raton corridor at \$29.3 million in economic output, \$8.9 million in worker earnings and 368 jobs; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak's agreement with BNSF for use of the track expires in January of 2016; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak indicates it does not have sufficient funds to pay BNSF to maintain the line to 79 mph passenger rail standards; and

WHEREAS, Amtrak needs funding in place to remain on the current route or it shall begin relocation or discontinuance of the train by January 2016; and

WHEREAS, long distance passenger rail is a vital and necessary part of our national transportation system and economy; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has declined to provide the needed fiscal support to allow Amtrak to pay for the necessary capital investment and annual maintenance in New Mexico, Colorado, and Kansas; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico, Kansas, and Colorado support the Southwest Chief and seek State and Congressional support for additional funding;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the New Mexico Association of Counties support legislation that would:

1. Allow the continuation of Amtrak's Southwest Chief along its current and historic route; and
2. Create a Southwest Chief Rail Service Fund or other reasonable funding alternatives; and support
3. Efforts by the New Mexico Congressional Delegation in supporting and maintaining the Southwest Chief on its current route.

Signed 
Affiliate Chair

Signed 
Affiliate Chair

Date June 19, 2014

NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES PRIORITY ISSUE

JOB CREATION & INDUSTRIAL REVENUE BOND (IRB) ACT IMPROVEMENT

(Proposed by Managers Affiliate & Executive Committee)

PROPOSAL:

NMAC supports legislation that would:

- Increase the capacity of local government to determine what projects may qualify for an IRB, and broaden the extent of the tax relief offered
- Expand the list of IRB eligible projects to include workforce housing development, and the extractive phase of mining and energy development
- Permit “ingredients of construction” to be contained in an IRB proposal, including construction material, labor, and associated professional services and contracting

BACKGROUND:

- Many existing projects, such as the extractive phase of mining and energy development, that could contribute to economic development and job growth do not now qualify for a county-issued IRB and therefore for property tax abatement and limited relief of gross receipts and/or compensating tax.
- “Ingredients of construction” associated with IRB projects are currently by law excluded from gross receipts and/or compensating tax relief.
- Rural cities and counties in New Mexico cannot use IRB’s to provide needed housing for the skilled workforce in their communities.