

**CITY OF GALLUP**  
**Allan Landavazo, Mayor Pro Tem**  
**TESTIMONY**  
**Redistricting Panel**  
**August 4, 2011**

---

I am Allan Landavazo, Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Gallup.

---

The City of Gallup proposes a redistricting plan that keeps the municipality whole by recognizing Gallup as its own singular community of interest. Splitting the City, as is currently the case, has been detrimental to both the City itself and its neighbors.

Gallup is uniquely situated as a “municipal island” surrounded by what we call a “checkerboard” of land jurisdictions – most prominently, lands held in federal trust for The Navajo Nation. As such, Gallup has long served as a trade center for the Navajo People, with our trade radius extending outward as much as 100 miles and more. This trade community has had its ups and downs, but the social and commercial interchange that takes place in Gallup has historically been of mutual benefit – symbolized in part by our annual Inter-Tribal Indian Ceremonial, New Mexico’s longest standing tourism event, which celebrates the Native cultures of our region and our hemisphere. (Just next week, we will be celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> annual Ceremonial.)

As part of this trade center status, Gallup is also an important transportation crossroads, serving as a hub for Interstate 40, the Burlington Northern-Santa Fé Railroad, and State highways intersecting the City from the north and south. Our location at the hub of these transportation systems has established Gallup as a significant tourist venue and corridor, reflected in *per capita* Lodgers’ Tax receipts ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> only to Santa Fé among all New Mexico cities. We were recently designated

by the State Legislature as the “Adventure Capital of New Mexico,” thus further elevating our tourism presence in the State.

This regional center status also creates unique demands on the City’s capacity to provide services and infrastructure. For example, our *per capita* arrest and citation load far exceeds most municipalities in the Southwest. Our municipal economy is organized around the provision of services to people from outside the City. Viewing Gallup from either a per-capita perspective or as a City of 21,678 is not realistic. The tremendous fiscal demands involved in the delivery of Gallup’s public services far exceed our residential population. Gallup is a far bigger city, in terms of public service demands than other New Mexico cities of similar residential population. This concept is essential in understanding Gallup’s unique community of interest.

It is also the case that the population of Gallup is “majority minority,” with Navajos comprising over 40% of our citizens. So the “community of interest” argument for Gallup is by no means based on race or ethnicity, but rather on the very distinct differences in political and economic structure that exist between the City and the neighboring communities of the Navajo Reservation. In our view, there is a rural/reservation dynamic, and there is an urban/crossroads dynamic. Although they necessarily inter-relate, they are extremely different political and economic cultures.

Gallup is a natural, singular small-urban community, and the surrounding reservation communities are natural, unique non-urban communities. Both sets of constituents deserve the best the American political system has to offer, but the needs, the dynamics and the governing systems are entirely different.

The City urges the re-drawing of district lines in a manner that recognizes Gallup as its own community of interest, with elected House and Senate members who clearly represent and advocate on behalf of that community.