

**MINUTES  
of the  
FIRST MEETING  
of the  
CAPITOL SECURITY SUBCOMMITTEE**

**June 20, 2016  
Room 326, State Capitol  
Santa Fe, New Mexico**

The Capitol Security Subcommittee convened on June 20, 2016 at approximately 1:30 p.m. in Room 326 of the State Capitol.

**Present**

Rep. Brian Egolf  
Sen. Stuart Ingle (by telephone)  
Sen. Daniel A. Ivey-Soto  
Rep. William "Bill" R. Rehm  
Rep. Patricio Ruiloba  
Sen. William E. Sharer  
Sen. Peter Wirth  
Rep. Monica Youngblood (by telephone)

**Absent**

**Staff**

Raúl E. Burciaga, Director, Legislative Council Service (LCS)  
John Yaeger, Assistant Director for Legislative Affairs, LCS

**Monday, June 20**

Mr. Burciaga noted that the speaker of the house of representatives and the president pro tempore of the senate appointed the subcommittee at the May 9, 2016 meeting of the New Mexico Legislative Council to work with the LCS to review the current level of security at the State Capitol and Capitol North and to serve as a steering committee in terms of implementing security changes. The council directed the subcommittee to be cognizant of the desire to maintain an open and accessible State Capitol when addressing the need for increased security.

Mr. Burciaga noted that the security of the State Capitol and Capitol North is the responsibility of the legislative branch, and that he, as director of the LCS, is charged by law with making "all rules and regulations for the conduct of all persons in and about the buildings and grounds (of the State Capitol and Capitol North) ... necessary and proper for the safety ... of the same" (Subsection I of Section 2-3-5 NMSA 1978). Mr. Burciaga said that this responsibility includes preparing for any incident that could disrupt the normal, day-to-day activity in the State Capitol and Capitol North.

Mr. Burciaga suggested that the subcommittee's role is to provide legislative guidance to him in fulfilling this responsibility and, if appropriate, make policy recommendations to the New Mexico Legislative Council or make statutory recommendations to the full legislature on other measures that should be considered.

Mr. Burciaga said that he anticipated that the subcommittee would want to meet at least once more this interim and may wish to meet in closed session to discuss some matters related to specific security vulnerabilities or security measures that are not readily apparent to the public. The subcommittee will be able to draw upon testimony and information from the staffs of the Legislative Building Services, Capitol Security, house and senate sergeants at arms, New Mexico State Police (NMSP) and National Conference of State Legislatures.

Mr. Burciaga reviewed the additional statutory authority related to State Capitol security by noting that the NMSP is responsible for protection of the legislature "while it is in session" (Subsection B of Section 29-2-27 NMSA 1978) and has concurrent jurisdiction for the protection of the State Capitol, including, at the discretion of the chief of the NMSP, supervisory authority over security forces employed at the State Capitol (Section 29-2-28 NMSA 1978).

Mr. Burciaga reported that this shared responsibility has worked remarkably well over the years, especially in light of some of the turf battles that plague other public safety agencies. Prior to each session, the NMSP, Capitol Security, house and senate sergeants at arms, capitol emergency medical services and city police and fire departments meet to go over protocols and ensure that they are all working from the same plan.

Mr. Burciaga reviewed the current security posture at the State Capitol and Capitol North by noting that the buildings are generally open and accessible to the public, no one is screened or searched prior to entering and weapons are not prohibited. He also noted that security officers are stationed throughout the buildings and monitor well over 150 security cameras; certain entrances to the buildings or offices are locked; panic buttons are installed and are being upgraded; and security officers follow specific protocols in the event of an incident.

Mr. Burciaga said numerous security assessments have been performed over the years and staff is prepared to discuss and review the details of those with the subcommittee.

Several members of the subcommittee expressed concern for the safety of the public, which is invited to visit the State Capitol and attend legislative sessions. Members expressed concerns that any number of specific and varied threats could result in numerous injuries and fatalities to members of the public visiting the State Capitol on any given day during a legislative session.

Subcommittee members also expressed the view that the State Capitol may be a target because of the very legislative actions that legislators take or fail to take, which potentially puts

not only members of the legislature, but also others in the buildings, including the public, in harm's way.

Several subcommittee members expressed a desire to maintain the open and accessible nature of the State Capitol and Capitol North, noting that the New Mexico State Capitol may be one of the few such buildings in the country in which members of the public may enter easily, meet with legislators informally and without appointments and speak at hearings without making prior arrangements. At the same time, subcommittee members expressed the view that increased security measures and the current accessible nature of the State Capitol are not mutually exclusive, noting that many public buildings, including the sports arena at the University of New Mexico, have recently increased security without hindering public access.

Subcommittee members directed staff to obtain information about the security measures in place at other state capitols.

Subcommittee members also discussed several general ways in which security might be improved, including reviewing and improving current security measures, increased training for all building occupants, restricting access into and within the buildings, screening at least some people entering the buildings and limiting weapons that may be brought into the buildings.

At the suggestion of staff, the subcommittee voted without objection at approximately 2:30 p.m. to close the meeting to discuss specific vulnerabilities and measures that could be explored to counter threats.

The subcommittee reconvened in open session at approximately 3:30 p.m. and immediately adjourned.