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HOUSE BILL 742

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

Ben Lujan

AN ACT

RELATING TO ELECTIONS; CREATING THE ELECTION REFORM TASK FORCE;
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION; DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. ELECTION REFORM TASK FORCE CREATED--
MEMBERSHIP-- APPOINTMENT-- DUTIES. --

A. The "election reform task force" is created and shall function from the date of its appointment until December 15, 2005.

B. The task force shall consist of fifteen members as follows:

(1) three members of the house of representatives shall be appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives and three members of the senate shall be appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate. Members

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1 shall be appointed from each house so as to give the two major
2 political parties in each house the same proportional
3 representation on the task force as prevails in each house;
4 however, in no event shall either party have less than one
5 member from each house on the task force;

6 (2) the state chairs of the major political
7 parties of the state and of the state county clerks'
8 association or their designees;

9 (3) five members of the general public, three
10 of whom shall be appointed by the governor and two of whom
11 shall be jointly appointed by the president pro tempore of the
12 senate and the speaker of the house of representatives; and

13 (4) the secretary of state or the secretary's
14 designee.

15 C. The task force may elect a chair and such other
16 officers as it deems necessary to carry out its duties.

17 D. Three absences from meetings of the task force
18 shall constitute grounds for removal of a member of the task
19 force. Upon the request of the chair of the task force, the
20 appointing authority shall replace the member who has failed to
21 attend three meetings of the task force.

22 E. A majority of the members appointed constitutes
23 a quorum for the transaction of business. The support of a
24 majority of the members appointed is required for adoption of
25 any action by the task force; provided, however, that the final

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1 report of the task force, including its recommendations and
2 proposed legislation, must have the support of a majority of
3 the legislative members.

4 F. The task force shall develop recommendations for
5 reform of New Mexico's election laws. To carry out this task,
6 the task force shall examine New Mexico's election system,
7 identify its strengths and deficiencies and consider
8 improvements that could be made to address any problem areas.
9 The task force shall submit specific recommendations and
10 proposed legislation to the governor and the New Mexico
11 legislative council no later than December 15, 2005.

12 G. The legislative council service shall supply or
13 contract for appropriate staff. Staff shall assist the task
14 force as directed by the chair. The task force may request
15 assistance from the legislative council service to draft
16 appropriate legislation for consideration by the legislature.

17 H. Members of the task force shall be reimbursed
18 for per diem and mileage expenses as provided for public
19 officers in the Per Diem and Mileage Act, except for
20 legislators, who shall be reimbursed at the same rate as for
21 service on a legislative interim committee as provided in
22 Section 2-1-9 NMSA 1978.

23 Section 2. APPROPRIATION. -- Eighty thousand dollars
24 (\$80,000) is appropriated from the general fund to the
25 legislative council service for expenditure in fiscal years

. 152982. 2

1 2005 and 2006 to carry out the provisions of this act,
2 including staff salaries, expert testimony and reimbursement of
3 the per diem and mileage expenses of the task force. Any
4 unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of
5 fiscal year 2006 shall revert to the general fund.

6 Section 3. EMERGENCY.--It is necessary for the public
7 peace, health and safety that this act take effect immediately.

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