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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 30
49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY
Thomas A. Garcia

A JOINT MEMORIAL
REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF EXTENDING THE RAIL RUNNER EXPRESS FROM SANTA FE
TO LAS VEGAS AND RATON.

WHEREAS, the "Rail Runner Express" is a commuter rail
service that runs between Belen and Santa Fe carrying people to
work, stores, entertainment and tourist attractions; and

WHEREAS, to date, two phases of the Rail Runner Express
have been completed, and the availability of this commuter
option has reduced the burden on commuters of skyrocketing
gasoline prices; and

WHEREAS, phase one extended commuter rail service from
Belen to the town of Bernalillo in July 2006; and

WHEREAS, phase two extended commuter rail service from
Bernalillo to Santa Fe, completing the entire route from Belen

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1 to Santa Fe in December 2008; and

2 WHEREAS, the residents of Las Vegas and Raton would like
3 to see the Rail Runner Express extended even farther north to
4 provide rail service for commuters and others to Las Vegas and
5 Raton and the towns in between; and

6 WHEREAS, many people commute from Santa Fe to Las Vegas
7 for employment at New Mexico highlands university, the Las
8 Vegas behavioral health institute, the Las Vegas medical center
9 and other employers; and

10 WHEREAS, many people who work in Santa Fe or Las Vegas
11 choose to live in Pecos, Rowe, Glorieta or other beautiful
12 locations and would benefit from commuter rail service; and

13 WHEREAS, Las Vegas is a growing community of nearly
14 fourteen thousand residents in San Miguel county, which has
15 more than thirty thousand residents; and

16 WHEREAS, Raton is a community of more than seven thousand
17 residents that serves as a gateway to many recreational sites
18 in New Mexico and Colorado; and

19 WHEREAS, both Raton and Las Vegas have rich historical
20 significance in New Mexico as communities on the original old
21 Santa Fe trail and both communities have preserved train
22 stations and railroad track that already exists connecting Las
23 Vegas and Raton; and

24 WHEREAS, the Rail Runner Express has met with great
25 enthusiasm and has been heavily patronized by commuters who

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1 work in Albuquerque but live in outlying communities and by
2 commuters who work in Santa Fe and live in other communities;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, the Rail Runner Express could serve additional
5 purposes besides commuter travel, such as providing access to
6 this beautiful region of the state for residents and tourists
7 as well as promoting convenient commerce between the northwest
8 region of the state and the state's capital city;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
10 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of transportation be
11 requested to complete a feasibility study to determine possible
12 routes, optimum frequency of trips and potential costs of
13 extending the Rail Runner Express from Santa Fe to Las Vegas
14 and Raton; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study should create plans
16 that can be set into action to maximize the use of possible
17 funds that the federal government may make available in the
18 future for public transit systems; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those plans should also
20 consider the need to ease the congestion on state highways
21 running from Las Vegas and Raton in northern New Mexico to Las
22 Cruces in southern New Mexico to reduce the need for expansion
23 of highways and the costs of maintaining those highways; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the feasibility study, when
25 complete, be presented to appropriate legislative interim

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1 committees by November 2010 and that a copy be submitted to the
2 library of the legislative council service; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 transmitted to the secretary-designate of transportation and
5 the governor.

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