

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CREATION OF A TASK FORCE TO ASSESS THE STATE'S
PLANNING DISTRICTS.

WHEREAS, in 1967, pursuant to the Regional Planning Act, New Mexico established seven planning districts, also known as "councils of governments" or "planning districts", throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, these seven planning districts received official designation by the federal government through the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, and they serve as regional economic development districts for the federal economic development administration; and

WHEREAS, in 1973, New Mexico enacted the Planning District Act, which defines certain geographic boundaries for each of the seven planning districts, clarifies the scope of services and provides certain parameters of programs and technical assistance, thus expanding on the Regional Planning Act; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the seven planning districts have assisted local governments through planning and technical assistance, have evolved to meet the needs of their unique regions and have increased the range of services provided; and

WHEREAS, by virtue of the direction given to them by their respective boards, commissions or councils, each

planning district has special areas of concentration, such as planning and development programs related to seniors, housing, transportation, colonias, tribal entities, land grants, comprehensive planning, work force development, transit, water and wastewater systems, business development, sustainable community development, revolving loan fund management, environmental protection, including brownfields revitalization, and economic development; and

WHEREAS, every state in the country utilizes some form of designated regional development organizations, and there are more than four hundred such organizations functioning today in the United States; and

WHEREAS, many of the regional development organizations in the United States have had to assess their role and performance in supporting local, regional and state planning and development efforts and outcomes and work with state and regional leaders to innovate, remain relevant and strengthen the utilization, accountability and effectiveness of these organizations; and

WHEREAS, there is a major opportunity for New Mexico's planning districts to provide local, regional and statewide leadership in planning and directing public and private investments into projects, programs and strategic economic initiatives;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the local government division of the department of finance and administration, the department of transportation and the governor's office be requested to convene a task force with the New Mexico association of regional councils, including all seven of the state's planning districts, to prepare a report that will assess the planning districts, with a focus on utilization and accountability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this report be presented to the legislative finance committee prior to December 1, 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the secretary of finance and administration, the director of the local government division of the department of finance and administration, the secretary of transportation and the board chairpersons and executive directors of each of the state's seven planning districts.