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HOUSE MEMORIAL 42

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

Alonzo Baldonado

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY TO ASSESS THE COSTS, BENEFITS, EFFICIENCIES
AND INEFFICIENCIES OF THE NEW MEXICO RAIL RUNNER EXPRESS.

WHEREAS, the primary function of the Rail Runner express
is to provide a viable commuter service, allowing commuters to
take the train instead of using their personal vehicles to
drive between Belen, Albuquerque, Bernalillo and Santa Fe; and

WHEREAS, the Rail Runner express offers a commuter option
that has reduced the burden on commuters of rising gasoline
prices; and

WHEREAS, the Rail Runner express may reduce motor vehicle
emissions by reducing traffic volume, delay the need to widen
highways for increased capacity and reduce highway maintenance
costs; and

WHEREAS, in order to attract commuters to use the train,

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1 the Rail Runner express must provide a convenient, fast and
2 expedient way for commuters to get to work; and

3 WHEREAS, at various times, and at various train stations,
4 very few commuters board, or disembark from, the trains; and

5 WHEREAS, unnecessary train stops cause a longer commute
6 for those commuters that do use the train; and

7 WHEREAS, the cost-effectiveness of the Rail Runner express
8 depends in part on ridership levels; and

9 WHEREAS, a cost-benefit analysis of the Rail Runner
10 express requires a study of many aspects of commuter train
11 service, including operating costs, ridership, ticket prices,
12 optimum frequency of trips, optimum frequency of stops,
13 maintenance of stations, maintenance of railroad crossings,
14 costs associated with traffic control, sections of track not in
15 use, associated liability, maintenance of the locomotive and
16 rail cars for the term of their projected use, employee
17 overhead, including ticket agents, potential for lost revenue
18 for unchecked ridership and availability of vehicle parking
19 adjacent to train stations; and

20 WHEREAS, after more than three years of operation, a study
21 would provide ample data to provide a better understanding of
22 the costs, benefits, efficiencies and inefficiencies of the
23 Rail Runner express;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
25 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative

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1 finance committee be requested to coordinate a study to be
2 conducted by the department of transportation and the
3 mid-region council of governments to study the costs, benefits,
4 efficiencies and inefficiencies of the Rail Runner express; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study, when complete, be
6 presented to the appropriate interim legislative committees by
7 November 2011; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
9 transmitted to the secretary of transportation, the mid-region
10 council of governments and the governor.