

HOUSE RESOLUTION 1

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026

INTRODUCED BY

Andrea Romero and Marianna Anaya and Andrea Reeb
and William A. Hall II

A RESOLUTION

CREATING AND EMPOWERING A SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES TO INVESTIGATE ALLEGATIONS OF CRIMINAL ACTIVITY
AND PUBLIC CORRUPTION FOR THE PURPOSE OF SECURING INFORMATION
TO DETERMINE WHETHER LEGISLATION OR OTHER LEGISLATIVE ACTION IS
NECESSARY TO PROVIDE FOR SAFETY AND WELFARE OR TO PROVIDE FOR
PUBLIC CONFIDENCE IN STATE GOVERNMENT.

WHEREAS, "Zorro ranch" was the name of a private estate located in Santa Fe county consisting of approximately ten thousand acres of real property, which included public land leaseholds; and

WHEREAS, Zorro ranch and the persons who owned Zorro ranch between 1993 and 2023 have been the subjects of great public concern since at least 2019; however, previous legislatures have not responded to this great public concern; and

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1 WHEREAS, members of the house of representatives reported
2 to the interim courts, corrections and justice committee about
3 allegations the members received that Zorro ranch was an
4 instrumentality of serious criminal activity that was not
5 investigated, prosecuted or otherwise acted upon by state or
6 local officers before potential investigations, prosecutions or
7 other actions were time barred pursuant to state law; and

8 WHEREAS, the house of representatives is concerned that
9 the failure to investigate the alleged criminal activity at
10 Zorro ranch and the risk of potential consequences of that
11 activity continue to affect the safety and welfare of the state
12 and that continued legislative inaction threatens public
13 confidence in state government; and

14 WHEREAS, Article 4, Section 2 of the constitution of New
15 Mexico vests the legislature with all powers necessary to the
16 legislature of a free state, which include the indispensable
17 power of inquiry, through which either chamber of the
18 legislature may conduct investigative procedures to secure
19 information necessary to legislate, to provide general
20 oversight of the administration of government, the expenditure
21 of public money and the use of public resources and to exercise
22 particular enumerated powers and duties; and

23 WHEREAS, as an example of the particular enumerated powers
24 and duties of the legislature, Article 4, Section 35 of the
25 constitution of New Mexico vests the house of representatives

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1 with the sole power of impeachment, which confers a unique duty
2 to oversee the conduct of state officers and compels the
3 investigation of allegations of misconduct; and

4 WHEREAS, with each chamber of the legislature having the
5 power to determine the rules for the chamber's own procedures
6 in accordance with Article 4, Section 11 of the constitution of
7 New Mexico, it is for the house of representatives to decide
8 whether to exercise the power of inquiry, the time and place at
9 which the power will be exercised and the manner in which the
10 power will be exercised;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
12 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the speaker
13 appoint a special committee of the house of representatives
14 consisting of two members from the majority party and two
15 members from the minority party and designate a chair from
16 among the appointed members, and that the committee investigate
17 Zorro ranch and the related allegations of criminal activity to
18 determine whether legislation or other legislative action is
19 needed to:

20 A. prevent and properly punish crime;
21 B. protect children and other vulnerable persons;
22 C. establish sufficient procedures for securing
23 civil justice;
24 D. ensure proper use and stewardship of public
25 money and resources; and

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E. provide for public accountability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee be vested with all necessary powers and process, including the powers to conduct hearings, compel the attendance of witnesses, administer oaths and issue subpoenas, and that the committee be authorized to function after the legislature adjourns *sine die*; provided that the committee shall not function after December 31, 2026; and provided further that process for the committee shall be issued by the chair and, while the legislature is in session, such process shall be served by the sergeant-at-arms and enforced by the house of representatives and, after the legislature adjourns, such process shall be enforced in any court with jurisdiction over the process and shall be in compliance with the applicable rules of the court; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chief clerk of the house of representatives provide staff for the committee while the legislature is in session and that the legislative council service be requested to provide staff for the committee after the legislature adjourns but, subject to the availability of funding, the committee may retain additional staff, including legal counsel, during the time the committee is properly functioning; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee keep records of its work, furnish an interim report to the leadership of the house of representatives on or before July 31, 2026 and furnish

1 a final report to all members of the house of representatives
2 on or before December 31, 2026 that includes a description of
3 the investigative procedures carried out by the committee, the
4 findings and conclusions the committee made through carrying
5 out those procedures and the committee's recommendations; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be
7 transmitted to the chief clerk of the house of representatives,
8 the president pro tempore of the senate, the New Mexico
9 legislative council and the director of the legislative council
10 service.

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