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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 66  
**47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2006**  
INTRODUCED BY  
Janice E. Arnold-Jones

A JOINT MEMORIAL  
REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY CREATE A TASK  
FORCE TO REVIEW THE INTEROPERABILITY OF FIRST RESPONDERS AND  
THE SURVIVABILITY OF COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, the term "interoperability" means the ability of  
emergency response providers to share voice, data and video  
information and to communicate across jurisdictions during  
emergencies, or as necessary; and

WHEREAS, the term "survivability" means the ability to  
provide and maintain adequate communications in the event of a  
natural disaster or catastrophic emergency, including one in  
which there has been significant damage to, or destruction of,  
critical infrastructure, substantial loss of ordinary  
telecommunications infrastructure or sustained loss of  
electricity; and

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1           WHEREAS, in every major public safety incident in recent  
2 memory, significant failures in communication have been cited,  
3 and high-profile incidents, including the Oklahoma City bombing  
4 and the events of September 11, have brought added attention to  
5 the need of first responders to be able to communicate with  
6 each other during catastrophic events; and

7           WHEREAS, in New Mexico, recent incidents, such as the  
8 Cerro Grande fire, the Bosque fires and the fires in  
9 southeastern New Mexico, have tested the state's  
10 interoperability capabilities, because each incident required a  
11 coordinated response by numerous first responders and multiple  
12 agencies; and

13           WHEREAS, emergency and communications planners must also  
14 prepare for a potential loss of the infrastructure that  
15 supports public safety communications, as occurred during  
16 Hurricane Katrina; and

17           WHEREAS, public safety agencies must, first and foremost,  
18 plan for their normal communications needs in order to respond  
19 to routine emergencies, and interoperability and communications  
20 redundancy are expensive and involve coordination among  
21 multiple levels of government; and

22           WHEREAS, these important issues often are not addressed by  
23 public safety agencies, which frequently struggle to meet even  
24 day-to-day communications needs;

25           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of public safety be  
2 requested to create a task force, in collaboration with other  
3 public safety agencies and first responders as identified by  
4 the legislature, to convene as necessary and examine the  
5 current communications issues, including interoperability and  
6 communications survivability in the state, and report its  
7 findings and recommendations to the legislative information  
8 technology oversight committee by December 31, 2006; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, at a minimum, the task force  
10 develop:

11 A. an assessment of the current status of  
12 interoperability in the state;

13 B. an assessment of the current status of  
14 communications survivability in the state;

15 C. recommendations on establishing a permanent  
16 entity of stakeholders to address and coordinate the issues of  
17 interoperability, survivability and public safety  
18 communications;

19 D. recommendations on priorities for possible state  
20 or federal funding, as it becomes available, to address the  
21 issues of interoperability, survivability and public safety  
22 communications;

23 E. recommendations to the legislature on changes to  
24 current state law that will remove barriers to or encourage  
25 communications interoperability and survivability;

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