

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATURE TO ASSIGN AN INTERIM COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE STATUTES AND CLARIFY LINES OF AUTHORITY REGARDING INTERGOVERNMENTAL RESPONSE TO AND COOPERATION IN EMERGENCY OR DISASTER SITUATIONS.

WHEREAS, the Cerro Grande fire, the largest wildfire in New Mexico's recorded history, had a great impact upon the city and county of Los Alamos, Los Alamos national laboratory, the Pueblos of San Ildefonso and Santa Clara, the state of New Mexico, the United States army corps of engineers, the bureau of Indian affairs, the forest service and other agencies of local, state and federal government; and

WHEREAS, the response to, and recovery from, the fire identified weaknesses in statutory authority to respond to the disaster by federal, state, tribal and local government responders; and

WHEREAS, evacuation authority and mutual aid response were identified as areas that needed clarification to permit a more rapid cooperative and coordinated intergovernmental response; and

WHEREAS, in the event of a disaster or emergency requiring a large-scale, coordinated response involving numerous agencies and governments, the lines of authority

need to be more clearly drawn; and

WHEREAS, in large-scale emergency situations, agency and government resources need to be mobilized and used efficiently to effectively preserve life and property; and

WHEREAS, statutory authority to locate, acquire, transport and use all resources needed at times of emergency or disaster must be modified to streamline the mobilization process so that all intergovernmental efforts are coordinated to make the most effective use of all resources available;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that an appropriate interim committee be assigned to take testimony from agencies of the federal, state, tribal and local governments regarding the way to improve access to resources, coordination between governmental and other emergency management and disaster relief agencies and clarification of the lines of authority; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the law be reviewed by that interim committee to identify amendments that are needed in state law to facilitate cooperation among all responders to an emergency situation or a disaster.