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## Senate Committee Approves Bipartisan Compromise to Fund NM Courts

Santa Fe, NM- This afternoon, the Senate Finance Committee approved a bipartisan proposal to provide emergency funding to New Mexico's judiciary branch.

The committee agreed to send an amended version of House Bill 261 to the full Senate earlier today. The bill, sponsored Reps. Nate Gentry (R-Bernalillo) and Zachary Cook (R-Lincoln and Otero), makes supplemental appropriations for the New Mexico Supreme Court and the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC). It will provide \$80,000 to the Supreme Court to help meet a projected \$82,600 shortfall in its current year budget, and it gives \$1.6 million to the AOC to pay for jury and witness fees as well as other operational needs.

"The emergency funds provided in this bill are essential to maintain the operation of New Mexico's courts," said Rep. Gentry. "I'm pleased the Senate Judiciary Committee has acted on this measure today. I urge the Senate to quickly take up this bill so we can send it to Gov. Martinez to prevent any disruption to our courts."

House Bill 261 will now move to the Senate for consideration.

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