

State Representative – Richard Berry

Interim Update



REPAVING AT TRAMWAY AND CENTRAL

I am pleased to report that the repaving at Tramway and Central has been completed. After receiving a number of calls from constituents about the poor condition of the paving at the intersection area I contacted our District Engineer, Larry Velasquez at the NM Department of Transportation. Mr. Velasquez was very responsive, not only with the initial repairs, but with the milling and overlay of the entire intersection and the section East of Tramway. My thanks go out to the NMDOT for working with me on this issue. We have been waiting for several years for the city to begin the park improvements at the NE corner of the intersection as well. Sen. Wilson Beffort and I have both appropriated state funds towards this effort. Once completed, these improvements in conjunction with the paving will really make a nice entrance to our neighborhood.

STIMULUS (ARRA) UPDATE

What was originally thought to be a \$1.8 billion dollar package directed to New Mexico has increased to over \$2.8 billion. Full details are still pending but it appears that 37% of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will be in the form of tax relief. As previously thought, the bulk of the stimulus funds will go towards education, healthcare (Medicaid) and road infrastructure and transportation. Total ARRA estimated funds to New Mexico are as follows:

- Medicaid \$545 million
- Education \$470 million
- Environment \$418 million
- Infrastructure \$370 million
- Transportation \$296 million
- Individual and Family Benefit \$244 million
- Higher Education \$191 million
- Unemployment Benefits \$115 million
- Energy Efficiency \$82 million
- Other Gov Services \$57 million
- Public Safety \$32 million

INTERIM COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

It looks like this will be another busy interim. With the economic downturn and the subsequent losses in the State investment funds there is much work to be done to stabilize the State's financial situation. I have been appointed to the Pension Solvency Task Force along with seven other legislators to tackle the issue of our retirement funds and their solvency. I have also been named as a designee to the Legislative Finance Committee as well as the Rural and Economic Development Committee and the New Mexico Finance Authority Oversight Committee. The Governor has informed us that he will call the Legislature back to a special session to work on additional fiscal matters. My assumption is that this will take place in August or September – after the July revenue estimates are received.

As always, it is my great honor to serve District 20 in the legislature. Please contact me with your comments, concerns or ideas during this interim. Your input is extremely valuable to me. My home phone number is 293-1130 and my legislative e-mail is richard.berry@nmlegis.gov