



**SIERRA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
RESOLUTION № 110-056**

OPPOSING EXPANSION OF THE NATURAL HERITAGE CONSERVATION ACT

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Sierra County, met in a regular meeting on January 27, 2022, at 10:00 A.M. in the Sierra County Administration Office, 855 Van Patten, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901; and,

WHEREAS, NMSA 1978, Section 4-37-1 (1995) provides that Counties have the power to, “provide for the safety, preserve the health, promote the prosperity and improve the morals, order, comfort and convenience of any county or its inhabitants”; and

WHEREAS, NMSA, 1978, Section 4-38-18 (1976) provides that a Board of County Commissioner has the duty and authority “[t]o represent the county and have the care of the county property and the management of the interest of the county in all cases where no other provision is made by law; and,

WHEREAS, Representatives Kristina Ortez (D-Taos) and Matthew McQueen (D-Santa Fe) have introduced legislation to amend the Natural Heritage Conservation Act to permit the State to acquire land and other interests in land to advance the purposes of the Natural Heritage Conservation Act; and,

WHEREAS, efforts by Santa Fe and Taos to acquire land throughout the State for conservation smacks of elitism and land-grabbing, is economically inefficient, undermines equity and local self-determination, and presents a less than optimally effective conservation mechanism; and,

WHEREAS, these conservation efforts may result in conflicting adjacent land uses, leaving properties fragmented with ecological consequences; and,

WHEREAS, HB36 conflicts with traditional values and the economics of local communities, and reinforces a separation of nature and culture; and,

WHEREAS, traditional utilitarian values toward nature in many of New Mexico rural communities are at odds with that of Santa Fe and Taos; and

WHEREAS, HB36 reflects an effort by representatives of Santa Fe and Taos to

impose their values and ideas about conservation and development on the remainder of the State; and,

WHEREAS, HB 36 threatens the livelihoods and jobs of laborers in our community who will lose access to the land as a result of the State's land acquisition; and,

WHEREAS, HB 36 bears the potential of disrupting the social systems in rural New Mexico by removing paths to self-sufficiency, by promoting a dependence on government handouts, and bears the potential of disproportionately benefitting some members of a community over others; and

WHEREAS, the State's acquisition of additional land would remove what is presently tax-producing land from the County's tax rolls, which would bear a substantial and disproportionate impact on the rural communities in New Mexico.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Sierra County that it stands in stark opposition to House Bill 36, and calls upon the New Mexico Legislature to vote down, and, if necessary, for the Governor to veto, this legislation.

APPROVED, ADOPTED AND RESOLVED this 27th day of January, 2022.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF SIERRA COUNTY


Jim Paxon, Chairman


Travis Day, Vice-Chair


Hank Hopkins, Commissioner

ATTEST



Shelly Trujillo, County Clerk

