

**BILLY G. GARRETT
COUNTY COMMISSIONER
DOÑA ANA COUNTY, NEW MEXICO**

SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

January 2011 to Present

CONSTITUENT ISSUES

- **Advocated Intervention in El Paso Electric Utility Rates**
 - Led effort on the Commission to authorize County intervention in electric utility rates cases (Res. 2015-24): saved residents and businesses of Doña Ana County more than \$7.5M in annual utility costs beginning in July 2016.
- **Expanded Solid Waste Disposal**
 - As a Board member for the South Central Solid Waste Authority, actively supported initiation of recycling programs, development of a countywide network of collection centers, creation of an award-winning “Illegal Dumping Initiative”, and completion of permits that will allow long-term operation of the county’s primary landfill.
- **Developed Regional Public Transit**
 - In response to constituent requests, actively supported development and operational funding for the South Central Regional Transit Authority: the only public transit system connecting rural residents to jobs, health care, and schools.
- **Improved Animal Shelter Operations**
 - As a County Commissioner, served 7 years on the Board of Directors of the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley. Championed “Zero in Seven” initiative that has reduced euthanasia rates at the shelter, thereby saving more than 25,000 dogs and cats since 2010.
- **Restricted Nighttime Noise**
 - Successfully introduced a County Ordinance (Article II, Chapter 261) that limits noise in rural areas during nighttime hours. The ordinance also recognizes the interest of rural residents in minimal government regulation and the inherent noise associated with some rural activities such as agriculture.

ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- **Supported New Business Activity**
 - Over the past 7 years supported economic development projects that provided more than \$9M in state financial assistance in exchange for the creation of at least 604 new jobs for New Mexico workers.

- Improved Guidance for Responsible Regional Development
 - Co-chair of *Viva Doña Ana!*. Over a 5-year period, this public-private initiative developed or updated six regional plans and support documents based on input from more than 250 public meetings. The initiative was funded by a \$2M HUD grant.
- Ensured Safe, Efficient Utility Operation
 - Board member and Chair (2017 to present) of the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority: a multi-jurisdictional public authority that provides water and wastewater service to the Santa Teresa Industrial Area and City of Sunland Park. The Authority is currently developing asset management plans, evaluating rates structures, and outlining a strategy for infrastructure development.
- Advocated for Improved Spaceport Access
 - Sponsor of Resolution 2014-85 calling for full vehicular access (all-weather road and upgraded interstate connection) to Spaceport America from Doña Ana County. The Commission approved a contract for construction of the southern road on October 24, 2017.

COLONIAS

- Secured Infrastructure Funding
 - During my tenure on the Commission, Doña Ana County received more than \$15M in grants for infrastructure planning and construction. Nine million dollars went directly into *colonias* for road improvements (\$4.7M), upgrading community facilities (\$1M), and wastewater treatment facilities (\$3.3M).
- Documented Infrastructure Backlog
 - At my request the County prepared the first comprehensive summary of infrastructure needs for which county government is responsible in all 37 of the *colonias* located within Doña Ana County; total value of this construction backlog is in excess of \$600M.
- Led Development of J. Paul Taylor Symposia
 - Co-chair of coalition that worked with New Mexico State University to produce the “J. Paul Taylor Symposium on Social Justice” in 2012 and 2013. The conferences resulted in greater participation of rural residents in regional planning, and grassroots advocacy for a public transit system.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

- Established Budgetary Controls
 - Introduced policy (Resolution 2013-40) approved by the Commission and used by County management to limit the use of unrestricted reserves (savings) to offset projected deficits in annual revenues.

- Maintained Strong Fiscal Accountability
 - Advocated and voted for policies that resulted in zero annual audit findings for four straight years. Doña Ana County received special recognition for this accomplishment from the NM Association of Counties.
- Improved Management Framework
 - Initiated action that led to an updated Mission Statement, new Guiding Principles, and the County's first Strategic Plan. These documents are increasingly being used to provide guidance for funding allocation and accountability for County operations.
- Initiated Asset Management Programs
 - Successfully advocated for development of asset management programs for County facilities and County roads. The programs will extend the life of current assets; stretch dollars spent on maintenance and repair work; and help set limits on new capital development.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ETHICS

- Took Zero Tolerance Position on Sexual Harassment
 - Led action that resulted in censure by the County Commission and eventual removal of the County Treasurer from public office after he admitted to inappropriate sexual advances toward a female employee.
- Advocated for Marriage Equality
 - Sponsored Resolution 2013-74 supporting marriage equality and endorsing the decision of the County Clerk to issue marriage licenses to couples regardless of gender.
- Championed Immigrant Rights
 - Actively engaged in discussions leading to Resolution 2013-19 that calls for comprehensive immigration reform, Resolution 2014-91 that prohibits County employees from asking about or considering immigrant status in their work, and Resolution 2014-57 that opposes use of local officers in enforcement of Federal immigration laws.
- Enhanced Oversight of the County Detention Center
 - Drafted Resolution 2016-69 that established a Citizen Advisory Committee for the Doña Ana County Detention Center.

PUBLIC LANDS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- Advocated for Establishment of Local National Monument
 - Provided testimony before a Congressional Committee regarding establishment of the Organ Mountains-Desert Peaks National Monument, and subsequently met with the Secretary of Interior to defend the monument as established.

- Supported Reduction of Greenhouse Gases
 - Drafted Resolution 2014-62 endorsing national legislation to reduce greenhouse gases through a “carbon fee and dividend” program.
- Proponent for Wildlife and Public Lands
 - Introduced resolutions that received Commission approval regarding respect and consideration of desert wildlife (Res. 2014-11), support for the Endangered Species Act (Res. 2015-31), and affirmation of the value of public lands (2016-66).