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**For Immediate Release**

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**SANDOVAL COUNTY RESIDENTS TO VOTE ON  
PROPOSED EXPANDED COURTHOUSE**

*Sandoval County Board of County Commissioners Approved Bond Question for November Election*

BERNALILLO, NM —The voters of Sandoval County will decide in November on whether to borrow up to \$41 million to fund expansion of the Sandoval County Courthouse in order to meet the demands of the fastest growing county in the state. Since the courthouse opened in 2005, the county's population has increased by 43 percent and the number of cases has increased by over 60 percent. The building originally housed two judges. Now there are five judges, and the workload calls for adding three more. Under State statute, "*Each board of county commissioners shall provide adequate quarters for the operation of the district court.*" The Thirteenth Judicial District Court hears criminal, civil, family court, and mental health cases.

"This is a desperately needed expansion in order to meet the needs of our growing communities," said Commissioner Jay Block. "If passed, the county will be in the position to meet its required statutory obligations to the court, and prevent unnecessary delays in both criminal and civil cases – delays that cost time, money, and endanger the public."

The proposed two-story, 48,000 square foot addition to the existing courthouse would have a total of seven courtrooms, three additional hearing rooms, and a new jury capable courtroom. The funds from the bond would be used to acquire property, plan, design, upgrade, construct, remodel, equip, and any other activities needed to complete the project. The Sandoval County Board of County Commissioners voted to approve placing the question on the November ballot at its August 24, 2022 meeting.

Commissioner Ken Eichwald added, "[i]t's good that we're growing, but we have a statutory responsibility to provide space for district court. It's like they say... 'you can pay me now, or pay me later' and later is going to be a lot more expensive."

If passed, the bond would add approximately \$20 to the annual property taxes of \$300,000 house. That increase would decline in four years. The total tax burden with the courthouse would still be lower than Sandoval County residents paid just four years ago.

To further reduce the impact of the bond, the county will pursue alternate sources from the state and Federal governments. "Sandoval County has always been prudent with the issuance of debt. As a result, we have some of the lowest county taxes in the state," said County Manager Wayne Johnson. "Our goal is to provide necessary facilities and services without overburdening the public with high taxes."

For more information, please visit [www.sandovalcountynm.gov](http://www.sandovalcountynm.gov).

*Sandoval County encompasses 3,714 square miles of diverse geography and has a population of approximately 140,000 people. It includes the incorporated municipalities of Bernalillo, Cuba, Corrales, Jemez Springs, Rio Rancho, San Ysidro, and the Town of Cochiti Lake as well as numerous unincorporated communities, and all or portions of seven Indian pueblos and all or portions of six Tribal entities/lands.*

*Sandoval County Proposed Expanded Courthouse (Architectural Rendering)*



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