



# Senator Eliot Shapleigh

District 29

El Paso Press Advisory

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## For Immediate Release

May 4, 2009

# NEW MEXICO RAIL RUNNER, EL PASO LEADERS TO HOST COMMUTER TRAIN DEMONSTRATION IN EL PASO

*"Within four years, Governor Bill Richardson put 100 miles of commuter rail in New Mexico. With the movement of rail west of the Juarez mountains, El Paso-Juarez can be a dynamic international commuter line. Thousands can then move safer and faster from Juarez to Downtown and UTEP, to better bind our bi-national community."*

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**EL PASO** - On **Friday, May 8, 2009** from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m., the New Mexico Rail Runner Express will host a demonstration of one of their commuter trains at 805 S. Santa Fe St. in El Paso. **El Paso city, county and state representatives will host a press conference at 2:30 p.m.** The office of Senator Eliot Shapleigh has worked to bring a demonstration of the car to El Paso

The [New Mexico Rail Runner Express](#) is a commuter rail line serving central New Mexico and administered by the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT). In 2003, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson made creation of the line a priority for his administration. The rail line currently runs between Belen and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

The first 50 miles of the Rail Runner were created for \$2.5 million per mile — the lowest cost per mile for a commuter rail line — by using existing Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) track.

Since beginning operation in July of 2006, the Rail Runner has had nearly two-million riders, covering 52 million passenger miles.

"Within four years, Governor Bill Richardson put 100 miles of commuter rail in New Mexico. With the movement of rail west of the Juarez Mountains, El Paso-Juarez can be a dynamic international commuter line. Thousands can then move safer and faster from Juarez to Downtown and UTEP, to better bind our bi-national community," Senator Shapleigh said.

- More -

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Last month, the El Paso and Las Cruces city councils [met in El Paso to discuss connecting the Rail Runner to El Paso and Las Cruces](#). According to the New Mexico Department of Transportation, the cost of doing so could be \$735 million.

Public viewing of the Rail Runner will begin at 9:30 a.m., concluding with a 2:30 p.m. press conference from the following confirmed El Paso city, county and state representatives:

- El Paso Mayor John Cook
- The Office of Senator Eliot Shapleigh - Communications Director Daniel Collins
- El Paso City Representative, District 2 Susie Byrd
- El Paso City Representative, District 7 Steve Ortega
- El Paso County Commissioner, Precinct 1 Anna Perez
- El Paso County Commissioner, Precinct 2 Veronica Escobar

Texas Department of Transportation District Engineer Charles Berry will also attend.

**What:** Demonstration and press conference on the New Mexico Rail Runner Express

**When:** Friday, May 8, 2009; public viewing begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a press conference at 2: 30 p.m.

**Where:** BNSF Copper Dock, 805 S. Santa Fe St.; the track will be adjacent to the parking lot on the dock's south side. ([Map](#))

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