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HOUSE MEMORIAL 51

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2014

INTRODUCED BY

Jeff Steinborn

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE GROWING POTENTIAL TO RECYCLE MUNICIPAL WASTE IN
NEW MEXICO AND REQUESTING A STUDY TO CAPITALIZE ON THAT
POTENTIAL.

WHEREAS, the disposal of the large volumes of solid waste
created by modern society has been a policy concern for state
and local governments for over a generation; and

WHEREAS, the United States environmental protection agency
estimates that eighty percent of the solid waste stream is
recyclable into valuable and beneficial products; and

WHEREAS, recycling is widely recognized as a means to
conserve water, energy and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, recycling creates on average five times more jobs
than placing that same material in a landfill; and

WHEREAS, a report commissioned by the New Mexico recycling

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1 coalition found that if New Mexico recycled fifty percent of
2 the state's solid waste stream, the state would see an increase
3 in five thousand direct jobs; and

4 WHEREAS, in 1990, New Mexico enacted the Solid Waste Act
5 and established the use of recycling and the diversion of waste
6 materials into useful products as priorities; and

7 WHEREAS, the Solid Waste Act set a statewide goal to
8 attain a twenty-five percent recycling rate by 1995 and a
9 further goal to increase that rate to fifty percent by 2000;
10 however, the current recycling rate stands at a mere sixteen
11 percent; and

12 WHEREAS, in recent years, New Mexico has seen vast
13 improvements in access to recycling, whereby eighty-seven
14 percent of incorporated communities now have either drop-off
15 options or curbside collections; and

16 WHEREAS, more than three million dollars (\$3,000,000) of
17 federal funding has recently been invested in rural and
18 underserved communities around the state to build and expand
19 recycling collection and processing infrastructure using a
20 regionalized hub-and-spoke method to ensure efficiencies; and

21 WHEREAS, smaller communities that process recyclables for
22 sale now have a recycled material cooperative available to
23 serve their best interests and ensure market pricing; and

24 WHEREAS, New Mexico communities now have initial recycling
25 infrastructures in place and are poised to work in concert with

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1 the state of New Mexico to expand recycling and increase
2 participation and diversion rates; and

3 WHEREAS, New Mexico may now be in a position to achieve
4 the fifty percent recycling rate goal set by the Solid Waste
5 Act;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
7 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department
8 of environment be requested to organize a task force to study
9 the potential of building the recycling capacity of New
10 Mexico's communities statewide; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
12 individuals with experience from varied levels of government,
13 nonprofit organizations and businesses who have technical
14 expertise in solid waste management and the recycling industry;
15 and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force:

17 A. analyze the current recycling capacity in New
18 Mexico and the potential to increase that capacity;

19 B. develop recommendations for legislative and
20 state agency actions designed to enable New Mexico to attain
21 the fifty percent recycling rate goal established in the Solid
22 Waste Act, including budget recommendations and a projected
23 timeline; and

24 C. report its findings and recommendations to the
25 appropriate interim committee designated by the New Mexico

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1 legislative council by November 1, 2014; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
3 transmitted to the secretary of environment, the governor and
4 the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.

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