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HOUSE MEMORIAL 91

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

INTRODUCED BY

Antonio "Moe" Maestas

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF RAILROADS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
NEW MEXICO AND THE GREAT POTENTIAL THAT RAIL SERVICE PRESENTS  
FOR FUTURE GROWTH.

WHEREAS, by establishing access to new markets and  
providing travel opportunities at what, at the time, were  
phenomenal rates of speed, railroads were critical to building  
a modern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a critical link for two  
transcontinental freight corridors, the transcontinental line  
owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe, or BNSF, and the sunset  
route run by the Union Pacific; and

WHEREAS, as the home of an international rail port  
preparing to open at Santa Teresa, New Mexico is poised to grow  
in importance as a major component of the nation's freight rail

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1 infrastructure; and

2 WHEREAS, in 1878, the Santa Fe railroad entered New  
3 Mexico, and the territory was rapidly connected to the  
4 mainstream of American commerce, with passenger and freight  
5 service to Kansas City, Chicago, San Diego, Los Angeles and  
6 Fort Worth following within the next ten years; and

7 WHEREAS, in 1882, the Santa Fe railroad connected Deming,  
8 New Mexico, to Nogales, Arizona, where it connected to the  
9 Southern Pacific railroad, creating America's second  
10 transcontinental rail line; and

11 WHEREAS, the access to eastern and California markets  
12 provided by the railroads led directly to a boom in New  
13 Mexico's livestock industry, wherein the total size of the  
14 state's cattle herd grew from one hundred sixty thousand to  
15 nearly one million and the total number of sheep more than  
16 doubled to almost five million within twenty years; and

17 WHEREAS, the establishment of the famed Harvey Houses in  
18 the towns along the rail lines and the introduction of premier  
19 passenger service from Chicago through New Mexico to Los Angeles  
20 in the 1880s and 1890s, including the famed "California  
21 Limited", which went from Chicago to Los Angeles in under  
22 eighty-four hours, ushered in an era of rail tourism to and  
23 from New Mexico; and

24 WHEREAS, freight and passenger rail service has continued  
25 to grow, becoming a mainstay of New Mexico's economy; and

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1           WHEREAS, several sectors of New Mexico's economy,  
2 including agriculture, mining, energy utilities and oil and gas  
3 production, are heavily dependent on rail services; and

4           WHEREAS, during periods in which spiking gasoline prices  
5 have made traveling by car prohibitive, passenger rail service  
6 has been the preferred alternative for commuters; and

7           WHEREAS, certain population groups, including seniors and  
8 veterans, are heavily dependent on transportation alternatives,  
9 and New Mexico's senior population is growing rapidly, with the  
10 percentage of the state's senior population expected to double  
11 by the year 2030 to over twenty-six percent; and

12           WHEREAS, railroads and related services employ thousands  
13 of New Mexicans; and

14           WHEREAS, at any given time, hundreds to thousands of  
15 construction workers are building a centralized fueling station  
16 for the Union Pacific railroad in Dona Ana county; and

17           WHEREAS, Santa Teresa is poised to become an international  
18 rail gateway, providing freight rail access for maquiladora  
19 products east into Texas and New Orleans and west to the  
20 California coast via the Union Pacific rail line; and

21           WHEREAS, the BNSF has nearly completed upgrades to its  
22 transcontinental line that runs through New Mexico and is the  
23 busiest freight rail line in the country; and

24           WHEREAS, the freight demands for the BNSF's  
25 transcontinental line and Union Pacific's sunset route are

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1 projected to be over capacity through 2035;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
3 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the critical  
4 role the railroad industry played in integrating New Mexico  
5 into the national marketplace be recognized; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all New Mexicans be encouraged  
7 to grasp the potential that the railroad industry holds for the  
8 state's future growth; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
10 transmitted to the governor, the secretary of transportation,  
11 and the editors of the *Las Cruces Sun*, *The Clovis New Journal*,  
12 *The Albuquerque Journal*, *The Santa Fe New Mexican* and *The*  
13 *Gallup Independent*.