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HOUSE MEMORIAL 35

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016

INTRODUCED BY

Jeff Steinborn and Bealquin Bill Gomez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE INSIGHTS EL PASO SCIENCE CENTER, TOGETHER WITH EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO TRAIL ASSOCIATION, ALSO KNOWN AS "CARTA", CERTAIN STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, WORK TOGETHER TO CONSIDER OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS FOR A NEW MEXICO ENTITY TO TAKE POSSESSION OF THE INSIGHTS EL PASO SCIENCE CENTER'S MOUNT CRISTO REY PROPERTY.

WHEREAS, the land in and around Mount Cristo Rey in southern Dona Ana county is renowned for its ancient dinosaur footprints and paleontological resources; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the natural and historical value of the Mount Cristo Rey site, two hundred acres of this property was donated to the Insights El Paso science center, a not-for-profit, hands-on science and technology center located in El Paso, Texas; and

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1 WHEREAS, the vision of the Insights El Paso science center
2 includes the establishment of a museum and amphitheater on the
3 Mount Cristo Rey site for the permanent protection of the
4 dinosaur trackways and geologic formations; and

5 WHEREAS, other prominent features exist on or near the
6 site, including El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro trail; the
7 famous statue of Christ the king, which stands atop Mount
8 Cristo Rey; and the convergence of eastbound, westbound and
9 northbound train service; and

10 WHEREAS, as many as thirty-five thousand pilgrims make the
11 pilgrimage to ascend Mount Cristo Rey each year; and

12 WHEREAS, multiple groups of school children participate in
13 field trips to the Insights El Paso science center's Mount
14 Cristo Rey property to hunt for fossils and survey the dinosaur
15 tracks; and

16 WHEREAS, the Insights El Paso science center has expressed
17 a desire to transfer the Mount Cristo Rey property to a New
18 Mexico partner that is committed to the site's preservation and
19 appropriate development as a scientific educational site; and

20 WHEREAS, because of the proximity of the Mount Cristo Rey
21 site to the southern boundary of the proposed Rio Grande trail,
22 Insights El Paso science center has recommended its
23 consideration as a southern terminus to the eventual Rio Grande
24 trail;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

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1 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it encourage
2 the Insights El Paso science center to engage in discussions
3 with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro trail association, also
4 known as "CARTA"; the state parks division of the energy,
5 minerals and natural resources department; the New Mexico
6 museum of natural history and science; the cultural affairs
7 department; the Rio Grande trail commission; the Roman Catholic
8 diocese of Las Cruces; New Mexico state university; and other
9 stakeholders to study the possibility of a New Mexico entity
10 taking ownership of the property for the continued enjoyment
11 and preservation of the site's natural and paleontological
12 resources; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these discussions include a
14 review of factors to assess the suitability of incorporating
15 the Insights El Paso science center's Mount Cristo Rey property
16 into the Rio Grande trail; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the executive director of the Insights El Paso
19 science center; the director of the state parks division; the
20 secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources; the
21 director of the New Mexico museum of natural history and
22 science; the secretary of cultural affairs; the chair of the
23 Rio Grande trail commission; the bishop of the Roman Catholic
24 diocese of Las Cruces; and the president of New Mexico state
25 university.

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