

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SUPPORT
3 AMENDMENTS TO EXPAND COMPENSATION UNDER THE FEDERAL RADIATION
4 EXPOSURE COMPENSATION ACT FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPOSED TO
5 RADIATION.

6
7 WHEREAS, from 1945 to 1962, the United States government
8 implemented a massive program of conducting hundreds of
9 atmospheric nuclear weapons development tests; and

10 WHEREAS, to provide uranium for the atmospheric nuclear
11 testing being carried out, the United States undertook
12 uranium mining and processing in many areas, especially in
13 New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nevada and Utah; and

14 WHEREAS, individuals in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado,
15 Montana, Nevada, Utah and elsewhere were hired to work in the
16 uranium mines and in uranium processing; and

17 WHEREAS, large uranium deposits were found on or near
18 the Navajo Nation, and many Navajo people were employed to
19 work in the mines; and

20 WHEREAS, many thousands of individuals have been exposed
21 to radiation in large doses through atmospheric nuclear
22 weapons testing or through employment in uranium mining and
23 processing; and

24 WHEREAS, radiation exposure has been linked to a number
25 of serious illnesses in exposed individuals, including

1 cancers; gastrointestinal, neurological and blood disorders;
2 and other conditions leading to the debilitation or death of
3 individuals exposed to radiation; and

4 WHEREAS, in 1990, the United States congress passed the
5 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act; and

6 WHEREAS, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act was
7 designed to provide some compensation to those exposed to
8 radiation through certain atmospheric nuclear weapons tests
9 and uranium mining and processing operations; and

10 WHEREAS, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act
11 designated certain areas of Arizona and Utah that were deemed
12 to have been downwind of atmospheric nuclear weapons testing
13 as official downwind areas for which compensation would be
14 provided; and

15 WHEREAS, the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act limited
16 compensation for uranium miners, millers and haulers to those
17 workers whom the uranium industry employed before
18 January 1, 1972; and

19 WHEREAS, the amount of Radiation Exposure Compensation
20 Act monetary compensation widely differs according to whether
21 an individual was exposed due to being in a downwind area or
22 according to the type of uranium industry-related work the
23 individual performed; and

24 WHEREAS, under the strict guidelines of the Radiation
25 Exposure Compensation Act, many individuals who have lived

1 downwind from test sites outside of Arizona, Nevada and Utah
2 or who worked in the uranium industry have been left with no
3 remedy for their radiation exposure; and

4 WHEREAS, United States Representative Ben R. Lujan
5 introduced House Bill 994, which was then cosponsored by
6 United States Representatives Michelle Lujan Grisham and
7 Steve Pearce, and United States Senators Tom Udall and
8 Martin Heinrich have cosponsored Senate Bill 331, both of
9 which would extend compensation to uranium workers who were
10 exposed from 1972 to 1990; and

11 WHEREAS, House Bill 994 and Senate Bill 331 also expand
12 the list of eligible workers to include uranium core
13 drillers, in addition to uranium miners, millers and ore
14 transporters, as employees potentially eligible for Radiation
15 Exposure Compensation Act compensation; and

16 WHEREAS, House Bill 994 and Senate Bill 331 would add to
17 the list of downwind areas in New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado,
18 Idaho, Montana, Nevada and Utah, as well as in the
19 United States territory of Guam; and

20 WHEREAS, House Bill 994 and Senate Bill 331 would make
21 all qualifying claims eligible for one hundred fifty thousand
22 dollars (\$150,000) of compensation, regardless of whether the
23 claimants were exposed as miners, millers, ore transporters,
24 on-site employees or individuals living in a downwind area;
25 and

1 WHEREAS, House Bill 994 and Senate Bill 331 would expand
2 the types of medical conditions rendering claimants eligible
3 for Radiation Exposure Compensation Act compensation;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
5 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional
6 delegation be requested to support the provisions of
7 United States House Bill 994 and United States
8 Senate Bill 331; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that United States
10 Representatives Ben R. Lujan, Michelle Lujan Grisham and
11 Steve Pearce and United States Senators Tom Udall and
12 Martin Heinrich be congratulated for their vision in
13 cosponsoring legislation to expand, under the Radiation
14 Exposure Compensation Act, the rights of individuals exposed
15 to radiation; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
17 transmitted to members of the New Mexico congressional
18 delegation. _____

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