

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING FEBRUARY 5, 2019 "ACEQUIA DAY" IN THE SENATE;
3 RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ACEQUIAS TO THE HISTORY,
4 CULTURE, ECONOMY AND MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES IN
5 NEW MEXICO; RECOGNIZING THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
6 NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION.

7
8 WHEREAS, for generations, acequias have supported a way
9 of life centered around local agriculture and customs of
10 sharing water; and

11 WHEREAS, acequias are a centuries-old form of water
12 governance in New Mexico that have created a cultural
13 landscape with a web of waterways that nurture tens of
14 thousands of acres of farmland; and

15 WHEREAS, acequia customs and traditions regarding
16 agriculture, seed saving, irrigation practices and food
17 preservation are important aspects of the cultural heritage
18 of New Mexico; and

19 WHEREAS, acequias contribute to the well-being and
20 livelihood of thousands of families who generate income from
21 farming and ranching, thereby supporting diversification of
22 New Mexico's economy through local food production; and

23 WHEREAS, acequias and community ditches number over
24 seven hundred in New Mexico with each one governed, operated
25 and maintained by elected commissioners and mayordomos; and

1 WHEREAS, the role of acequias in local governance has
2 been affirmed by laws enacted by the state of New Mexico
3 recognizing acequias as political subdivisions and enabling
4 acequias to have important powers in local water management;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, for more than fifty years, acequias have come
7 together to protect and defend water rights, advocate for
8 water policies strengthening acequia governance and support
9 funding programs for acequia infrastructure; and

10 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia association was
11 established in 1989 to advocate for water policy beneficial
12 to acequias, and the acequia commission was created in
13 statute in 1993 to serve as an advisory body in state
14 government; and

15 WHEREAS, hydrological studies by the New Mexico water
16 resources research institute at New Mexico state university
17 have documented hydrological benefits of acequias, including
18 aquifer recharge through earthen ditches; and

19 WHEREAS, as water management is complicated by long-term
20 drought and increasing demands for water, acequias will
21 continue to be important in any decisions about water policy
22 at the local and state levels;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
24 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 5, 2019 be declared
25 "Acequia Day" in the senate in honor of the contributions of

1 acequias to the history, culture, economy and management of
2 water resources in New Mexico; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate recognize the
4 thirtieth anniversary of the New Mexico acequia association
5 and its contributions to water policy in New Mexico; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate recognize the
7 importance of acequias in New Mexico water policy and
8 encourage state agencies to consult with acequia leadership
9 in decisions that may affect acequias; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to the New Mexico acequia association and the
12 acequia commission.

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