

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 89

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

INTRODUCED BY

W. Ken Martinez

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
COMMITTEE ASSESS THE PUBLIC HEALTH VALUE OF IMPLEMENTING THE
PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, every New Mexican has an equal right to live in a
healthy and safe environment; and

WHEREAS, the precautionary principle, a belief that "when
an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the
environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if
some cause and effect relationships are not fully established
scientifically"; and

WHEREAS, experts have recognized the precautionary
principle as a highly effective decision-making tool for
reducing negative and costly impacts on public health resulting
from exposure to environmental toxins; and

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1 WHEREAS, the state departments of health and environment
2 and other state agencies are charged with controlling and
3 abating public health conditions, including the causes of
4 disease, and with maximizing the economic and cultural benefits
5 of healthy people and communities; and

6 WHEREAS, the rates of diseases and conditions linked to
7 environmental toxins, including cancer, asthma, Alzheimer's
8 disease, Parkinson's disease, birth defects, autism, diabetes,
9 endometriosis, multiple chemical sensitivities, developmental
10 disabilities and learning disorders, are escalating; and

11 WHEREAS, there are approximately eighty-five thousand
12 industrial chemicals in use today, most of which have not been
13 adequately tested for toxicity; and

14 WHEREAS, many New Mexicans are needlessly exposed to
15 hazardous toxins in their homes, schools, workplaces and
16 communities and are, therefore, suffering negative health
17 impacts; and

18 WHEREAS, the prevalence of asthma in the United States has
19 doubled in the past twenty years, with dramatic increases among
20 children, and the state department of health estimated, in
21 2001, that at least ninety-one thousand seven hundred adults in
22 the state have asthma; and

23 WHEREAS, the precautionary principle outlines
24 opportunities to promote environmental justice, protect the
25 environment and safeguard the health of all New Mexicans;

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