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SENATE MEMORIAL 24

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007

INTRODUCED BY

Kent L. Cravens

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT TO
PROTEST THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY'S NEW
ARSENIC STANDARD.

WHEREAS, the United States environmental protection agency
has changed the standard for the allowable level of arsenic in
drinking water from fifty parts per billion to ten parts per
billion; and

WHEREAS, the new standard has required New Mexicans to
spend approximately six hundred fifty thousand dollars
(\$650,000) to date, but it is estimated that one hundred
thirty-five million dollars (\$135,000,000) is needed to rebuild
water treatment facilities and that approximately twenty
million dollars (\$20,000,000) will be needed annually in
additional operating expenses; and

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1 WHEREAS, seventy-seven million five hundred thousand
2 dollars (\$77,500,000) has been submitted this year in capital
3 outlay requests for arsenic removal upgrades to water treatment
4 systems; and

5 WHEREAS, water bills to consumers in the affected areas
6 will increase between forty dollars (\$40.00) and one hundred
7 dollars (\$100) per month; and

8 WHEREAS, the environmental protection agency bases the new
9 standard on foreign studies that related high arsenic levels in
10 the range of several hundred parts per billion to adverse
11 health effects; and

12 WHEREAS, the environmental protection agency cannot
13 produce data to demonstrate adverse health effects of the
14 current arsenic levels in New Mexico water; and

15 WHEREAS, on the contrary, a study in Utah demonstrates
16 that background levels of arsenic found in the American west
17 have no adverse health effects; and

18 WHEREAS, the source of arsenic in New Mexico water is
19 volcanic soils, and arsenic has always been present in the
20 water with no demonstrable adverse effects on public health;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, in 2002, the New Mexico legislature requested the
23 environmental protection agency to relax the arsenic standard
24 with no result;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE

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1 OF NEW MEXICO that congress and the president be requested to
2 rescind the decision by the environmental protection agency to
3 lower the arsenic standard; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
5 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation and to
6 the president.

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