

A MEMORIAL

URGING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO EXERT PRESSURE ON THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY TO ENSURE THE CLEANUP OF RADIOACTIVE, HAZARDOUS AND TOXIC WASTE AT LOS ALAMOS NATIONAL LABORATORY AND SURROUNDING AREAS.

WHEREAS, Los Alamos national laboratory has served our country for over sixty-five years; and

WHEREAS, many scientific breakthroughs have been achieved at Los Alamos national laboratory that could not have been accomplished without the full and complete dedication of New Mexicans who work every day at the laboratory; and

WHEREAS, sixty-five years of operations in plutonium processing, plutonium pit manufacturing, explosives testing and chemical and materials science research have generated more than eighteen million cubic feet of hazardous, toxic and radioactive waste that is buried in unlined pits, trenches and shafts at Los Alamos national laboratory; and

WHEREAS, Senators Bingaman and Udall were members of a bipartisan group of eight United States senators who called for six billion dollars (\$6,000,000,000) in economic recovery package funds to be dedicated to "shovel-ready" cleanup projects at existing United States department of energy sites, including Los Alamos national laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment

Act of 2009 contains funding for the cleanup of toxic waste at facilities such as Los Alamos national laboratory, including funding for the creation of new jobs to accomplish the cleanup; and

WHEREAS, the United States department of energy will have discretion to determine funding allocations for its cleanup sites; and

WHEREAS, Article 20, Section 21 of the constitution of New Mexico states that "the protection of the state's beautiful and healthful environment is hereby declared to be of fundamental importance to the public interest, health, safety and the general welfare" and calls for the establishment and implementation of environmental laws and regulations to protect the state's citizens; and

WHEREAS, local, state and federal government agencies have a responsibility to protect the public health and welfare by setting regulations and enforcing laws that protect water resources; and

WHEREAS, as of 2002, it is estimated that more than seven hundred million dollars (\$700,000,000) has been spent by the United States department of energy on cleanup efforts at Los Alamos national laboratory; and

WHEREAS, much of the funding was spent on investigations and preliminary studies and not on actual contamination removal; and

WHEREAS, the United States department of energy estimates that more than two billion dollars (\$2,000,000,000) in additional funding is necessary for the cleanup at Los Alamos national laboratory; and

WHEREAS, the Cerro Grande fire, which occurred in May 2000, burned over seven thousand acres of Los Alamos national laboratory property, resulting in the migration of plutonium and other contaminants, at levels not seen since the 1960s, through the watersheds to the Rio Grande; and

WHEREAS, on March 1, 2005, New Mexico's department of environment and the United States department of energy signed an administrative "Order on Consent" to address legacy waste at Los Alamos national laboratory, setting a timetable for cleanup; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico department of environment, the United States department of energy, Los Alamos national laboratory, nongovernmental organizations and individuals are negotiating the renewal of a ten-year permit for ongoing hazardous waste operations at Los Alamos national laboratory that is intended to demonstrate compliance with the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act permit of 1976; and

WHEREAS, workers that are thoroughly and properly trained will sustain fewer injuries and be involved in fewer accidents; and

WHEREAS, well-trained workers will be a valuable asset

and create a local work force able to provide expertise at other cleanup sites; and

WHEREAS, healthy communities and ecosystems require clean, innovative and life-affirming science and technology that will benefit the economy, the future and the health of all;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional delegation be urged to exert pressure on the United States department of energy to ensure the cleanup of radioactive, hazardous and toxic waste at the Los Alamos national laboratory and surrounding areas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation use their influence to ensure that funding provided in the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 be utilized for the cleanup of toxic waste at Los Alamos national laboratory; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional delegation urge the United States environmental protection agency and New Mexico's department of environment to enforce regulations and compliance orders for the cleanup of contaminated sites; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional delegation work to fully fund efforts to enhance and develop clean, innovative and life-affirming science and technology in

order to clean up radioactive, toxic and hazardous materials at Los Alamos national laboratory; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional delegation work to ensure that funding is available to establish state-of-the-art training programs in radioactive, toxic and hazardous waste cleanup to prepare local workers for cleanup efforts at Los Alamos national laboratory; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional delegation work to provide adequate federal funds to ensure compliance with the legally enforceable agreements and federal and state permits that oversee the cleanup; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation, the United States department of energy, Los Alamos national laboratory, the United States environmental protection agency, the regional office of the United States environmental protection agency in Dallas, Texas, and New Mexico's department of environment.