

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 61

2 **49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2010**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 URGING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO IDENTIFY
12 FUNDS AND DEDICATE THOSE FUNDS TO FINISHING UNITED STATES
13 HIGHWAY 491 SOON.

14
15 WHEREAS, last year, New Mexico made a generous
16 contribution to finishing United States highway 491, which runs
17 from Gallup to Shiprock; and

18 WHEREAS, the highway is the primary artery for travel
19 through many of the chapters of the Navajo Nation and the only
20 primary highway for those going from Gallup to the Four Corners
21 area; and

22 WHEREAS, the highway has been used for transport of
23 uranium and, therefore, may have high concentrations of
24 radioactive residue along its shoulders, even though the
25 highway is probably used for more pedestrian traffic than

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1 anywhere else in the state; and

2 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation has dedicated sizeable amounts
3 of money for completion of the highway; and

4 WHEREAS, managing to piece together funding for
5 construction of the highway has been a difficult and
6 complicated process, especially because easements and rights of
7 way are held by many separate people, as well as by states,
8 tribes and the federal government; and

9 WHEREAS, finding and dedicating the funding is especially
10 important because the highway remains only two lanes wide in
11 places, even though it carries heavy and slow truck traffic
12 across the state; and

13 WHEREAS, through dedication and persistence, New Mexico
14 and the Navajo Nation have approximately one-third of the
15 funding needed to broaden the highway to four lanes, though
16 funding for two-thirds of the construction and paving has not
17 yet been identified;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
19 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico congressional
20 delegation be encouraged to help identify funds that can be
21 used to complete the United States highway 491 project; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional
23 delegation be urged to stay in close touch with legislative
24 leadership so that a funding strategy can be developed; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico congressional

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1 delegation be assured that the legislature is prepared to help
2 in the efforts to find funding for completion of the United
3 States highway 491 project; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
5 transmitted to all members of New Mexico's congressional
6 delegation, to the president and speaker of the council of the
7 Navajo Nation, to the secretary of transportation, to members
8 of the state transportation commission, to the governor and to
9 the members of the New Mexico legislative council.