

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE GROWING POTENTIAL TO RECYCLE MUNICIPAL WASTE
IN NEW MEXICO AND REQUESTING A STUDY TO CAPITALIZE ON THAT
POTENTIAL.

WHEREAS, the disposal of the large volumes of solid
waste created by modern society has been a policy concern for
state and local governments for over a generation; and

WHEREAS, the United States environmental protection
agency estimates that eighty percent of the solid waste stream
is recyclable into valuable and beneficial products; and

WHEREAS, recycling is widely recognized as a means to
conserve water, energy and natural resources; and

WHEREAS, recycling creates on average five times more
jobs than placing that same material in a landfill; and

WHEREAS, a report commissioned by the New Mexico
recycling coalition found that if New Mexico recycled fifty
percent of the state's solid waste stream, the state would see
an increase in five thousand direct jobs; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, New Mexico enacted the Solid Waste Act
and established the use of recycling and the diversion of
waste materials into useful products as priorities; and

WHEREAS, the Solid Waste Act set a statewide goal to
attain a twenty-five percent recycling rate by 1995 and a
further goal to increase that rate to fifty percent by 2000;

however, the current recycling rate stands at a mere sixteen percent; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, New Mexico has seen vast improvements in access to recycling, whereby eighty-seven percent of incorporated communities now have either drop-off options or curbside collections; and

WHEREAS, more than three million dollars (\$3,000,000) of federal funding has recently been invested in rural and underserved communities around the state to build and expand recycling collection and processing infrastructure using a regionalized hub-and-spoke method to ensure efficiencies; and

WHEREAS, smaller communities that process recyclables for sale now have a recycled material cooperative available to serve their best interests and ensure market pricing; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico communities now have initial recycling infrastructures in place and are poised to work in concert with the state of New Mexico to expand recycling and increase participation and diversion rates; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico may now be in a position to achieve the fifty percent recycling rate goal set by the Solid Waste Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of environment be requested to organize a task force to study the potential of building the recycling capacity of New

Mexico's communities statewide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include individuals with experience from varied levels of government, nonprofit organizations and businesses who have technical expertise in solid waste management and the recycling industry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force:

A. analyze the current recycling capacity in New Mexico and the potential to increase that capacity;

B. develop recommendations for legislative and state agency actions designed to enable New Mexico to attain the fifty percent recycling rate goal established in the Solid Waste Act, including budget recommendations and a projected timeline; and

C. report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate interim committee designated by the New Mexico legislative council by November 1, 2014; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of environment, the governor and the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.