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SENATE MEMORIAL 41

**51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2014**

INTRODUCED BY

Pete Campos

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER, INTERSTATE STREAM  
COMMISSION AND REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS TO STUDY OPTIONS FOR  
ADDRESSING WATER SUPPLY ISSUES IN NORTHEASTERN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is located in the great American  
southwestern desert; and

WHEREAS, the effects of climate change, unpredictable  
weather patterns and water shortages threaten the economy and  
the public peace, health, safety and welfare, affecting New  
Mexico farmers, ranchers, city residents and rural residents  
alike; and

WHEREAS, as of July 2013, the state was in its driest, and  
warmest, twenty-four-month or thirty-six-month period on  
record, with over eighty-six percent of the state experiencing  
extreme or exceptional drought conditions and with all

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1 reservoirs in the state below fifty percent capacity and some  
2 as low as thirteen percent; and

3 WHEREAS, heavy rains in late summer eased drought  
4 conditions in much of the state, but reservoir levels in the  
5 Rio Grande basin remained much below average and thirty-six  
6 percent of the state was still experiencing severe drought  
7 conditions in December; and

8 WHEREAS, weather patterns, such as those in 2013, further  
9 highlight the need to be able to store and transport water in  
10 particularly dry years; and

11 WHEREAS, northeastern New Mexico, like all regions of the  
12 state, has been affected by these conditions; and

13 WHEREAS, some areas of the state do not have the  
14 capability to store enough water to make the best of years with  
15 higher-than-average precipitation by storing water for use in  
16 years with below-average precipitation; and

17 WHEREAS, large, regional projects that increase the  
18 ability to store and import water from other areas have proven  
19 to be a good approach to addressing water shortage issues,  
20 helping communities address some of their water shortage  
21 issues; and

22 WHEREAS, large projects, such as the Ute water pipeline  
23 project and the Navajo-Gallup water supply project, have been  
24 planned for years but have only recently begun construction to  
25 help store water and import it to areas of the state that

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1 desperately need it; and

2 WHEREAS, while large, regional water projects are a good  
3 approach to making the most of limited water resources and  
4 might be a good fit for a region like northeastern New Mexico,  
5 they do take years to develop, plan and construct;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
7 OF NEW MEXICO that the office of the state engineer, interstate  
8 stream commission and water stakeholders in northeastern New  
9 Mexico be requested to study ways of addressing water shortage  
10 issues in northeastern New Mexico, including identifying  
11 potential water sources outside of the region and the  
12 possibility of developing a pipeline or some other large-scale  
13 regional water project to bring water to the area; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
15 transmitted to the office of the state engineer, the interstate  
16 stream commission, the county commissioners of Guadalupe, San  
17 Miguel, Mora and Colfax counties and the cities of Raton, Las  
18 Vegas and Santa Rosa.