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SENATE MEMORIAL 72

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

Pat Woods and Stuart Ingle

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING ACTION AND ASSISTANCE FROM THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE, THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY TO ABATE AND PREVENT THE FURTHER SPREAD OF PERFLUOROCTANIC, PERFLUOROCTANESULFONIC ACID AND OTHER CONTAMINANTS FROM CANNON AIR FORCE BASE.

WHEREAS, Curry county is composed primarily of agricultural land, with ranching, farming and dairies being the primary nongovernmental activities as part of Curry county's agricultural base; and

WHEREAS, Curry county recognizes the importance of Cannon air force base and supports its mission, its personnel and their commitment, not only to the security and protection of the United States, but to the community; and

WHEREAS, Cannon air force base and the United States air

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1 force have disclosed that the water table below and primarily
2 to the east-southeast of Cannon air force base has been
3 infiltrated with contaminants from fire retardants at Cannon
4 air force base over the last several decades; and

5 WHEREAS, aqueous film-forming foam fire retardant
6 contaminants have been found in the paleochannel that flows in
7 a south-southeast direction and is a major water source for
8 property owners south and southeast of Cannon air force base;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, according to reports provided to the residents of
11 Curry county, these contaminants are moving east, following the
12 deepest and best water supply at the approximate rate of one
13 thousand feet per year, presenting an immediate threat to Curry
14 county's agricultural industry, livability, commodities, land
15 valuation and more importantly, the water supplied to
16 individual residents and their property and businesses; and

17 WHEREAS, drinking water samples have been found to have
18 contaminant levels that exceed the lifetime health advisory for
19 human consumption; and

20 WHEREAS, the water contaminants have caused significant
21 injury and loss to at least one business and have affected
22 those property owners who have ingested drinking water obtained
23 from their wells east and south of Cannon air force base; and

24 WHEREAS, the contaminants have created a negative impact
25 on crops, dairy and beef operations and caused agricultural

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1 losses in Curry county; and

2 WHEREAS, a letter from Heather Wilson, secretary of the
3 United States air force, to United States Senator Martin
4 Heinrich states in part, " ... the Air Force's priority is to
5 protect drinking water supplies for humans from unacceptable
6 levels of perfluorooctanic and perfluorooctanesulfonic acid
7 that result from our activities"; and

8 WHEREAS, to date, Curry county is unaware of any plans or
9 operations to remove these contaminants from the underground
10 water supply in Curry county to prevent the spread of the
11 underground contaminants or to provide compensation to the
12 residents or businesses that are economically damaged by the
13 contaminants;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
15 OF NEW MEXICO that the United States air force, the United
16 States department of defense, the United States department of
17 homeland security and other federal agencies be requested to
18 take immediate action to address and stop the spread of the
19 known underground contaminants resulting from the use of
20 aqueous film-forming foam fire retardants at Cannon air force
21 base; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Cannon air force base, the
23 United States air force, the United States department of
24 defense and the United States department of homeland security
25 take immediate steps, including designation for "special

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1 priorities assistance" pursuant to Presidential Executive Order
2 13603, to provide assistance to Curry county residents or
3 businesses that have been or are currently impacted by or will
4 be impacted in the future by the known contaminants based upon
5 current flow reports; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Cannon air force base, the
7 United States air force and the United States department of
8 defense have acknowledged that the contaminants are in the
9 water system and are spreading and, as a result, immediate
10 action is required to prevent the spread of these contaminants
11 and to address the fears and the concerns in Curry county
12 regarding the water supply; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that action must be implemented so
14 that corrective measures can be taken and compensation provided
15 to Curry county residents in the immediate future; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that representatives of Cannon air
17 force base, the United States air force, the United States
18 department of defense and Curry county's congressional
19 delegation or their designees be requested to appear and
20 participate in a town hall meeting in Clovis, New Mexico, to
21 address a prompt response to the spread of the contaminants in
22 the water supply, including removal of the contaminants, access
23 to information and financial compensation for Curry county
24 residents and businesses that have already been negatively
25 impacted by the contamination; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copies of this memorial be
2 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation, the
3 secretary of the United States air force, the governor, the
4 acting secretary of the United States department of defense,
5 the secretary of the United States department of homeland
6 security and the Cannon air force base wing commander.

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