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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 89

45TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2002

INTRODUCED BY

Judy Vanderstar Russell

A JOINT MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT TO
PROTEST THE UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY' S
NEW ARSENIC STANDARD.**

**WHEREAS, the United States environmental protection
agency has changed the standard for the allowable level of
arsenic in drinking water from fifty parts per billion to ten
parts per billion; and**

**WHEREAS, the new standard will require New Mexicans to
spend approximately four hundred million dollars
(\$400,000,000) to rebuild water treatment facilities plus
approximately twenty million dollars (\$20,000,000) annually in
additional operating expenses; and**

**WHEREAS, water bills to consumers in the affected areas
will increase between forty dollars (\$40.00) and one hundred**

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1 dollars (\$100) per month; and

2 WHEREAS, the environmental protection agency bases the
3 new standard on foreign studies that related high arsenic
4 levels in the range of several hundred parts per billion to
5 adverse health effects; and

6 WHEREAS, the environmental protection agency cannot
7 produce data to demonstrate adverse health effects of the
8 current arsenic levels in New Mexico water; and

9 WHEREAS, on the contrary, a study in Utah demonstrates
10 that background levels of arsenic found in the American west
11 have no adverse health effects; and

12 WHEREAS, the source of arsenic in New Mexico water is
13 volcanic soils, and arsenic has always been present in the
14 water with no demonstrable adverse effects on public health;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
16 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor and the department of
17 environment be requested to vigorously protest and appeal the
18 decision by the environmental protection agency to lower the
19 arsenic standard; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
21 transmitted to the governor and to the secretary of
22 environment.