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SENATE MEMORIAL 18

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

Linda M. Lopez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE CONSERVANCY DISTRICT, IN COOPERATION WITH THE MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE STATUS OF THE RIO GRANDE LEVEES WITHIN VALENCIA, BERNALILLO AND SANDOVAL COUNTIES.

WHEREAS, the levees along the Rio Grande are of differing designs and ages, and some of these levees have been constructed as engineered levees while others are spoil bank levees constructed from dredged materials removed from riverside drains; and

WHEREAS, in some reaches of the Rio Grande no levees exist at all; and

WHEREAS, the federal emergency management agency has remapped the Rio Grande floodplain in Bernalillo county, and, lacking engineering certification of a certain reach of spoil

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1 bank levee, in September 2008 designated two thousand five
2 hundred acres in the south valley of Bernalillo county as zone
3 "A" floodplain; and

4 WHEREAS, the federal emergency management agency
5 floodplain designation has now resulted in the need for flood
6 insurance to be purchased for approximately one thousand five
7 hundred residences on the valley floor at the cost of
8 approximately two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per year; and

9 WHEREAS, the federal emergency management agency has also
10 remapped the Rio Grande floodplain in Sandoval county and,
11 lacking engineering certification of certain reaches of spoil
12 bank levee, in September 2008 designated a little over one
13 thousand six hundred thirty-two acres in the town of Bernalillo
14 as zone "A" floodplain; and

15 WHEREAS, the federal emergency management agency has
16 advised local floodplain managers that in the next federal
17 emergency management agency floodplain remapping efforts, the
18 engineered levees will need to be certified as meeting the
19 post-hurricane Katrina and new United States army corps of
20 engineers levee standards; and

21 WHEREAS, certain portions of the engineered levees have
22 been studied by the United States army corps of engineers,
23 which determined that major portions of the engineered levees
24 are fifty years old and do not meet the post-hurricane Katrina
25 and new United States army corps of engineers levee standards

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1 and may not be recognized by the federal emergency management
2 agency; and

3 WHEREAS, according to the United States army corps of
4 engineers, the reconstruction cost of the levees within
5 Bernalillo county is estimated at one hundred twenty million
6 dollars (\$120,000,000); and

7 WHEREAS, environmental studies, permitting and design of
8 the reconstruction of the levees within Bernalillo county are
9 estimated to take two years, with reconstruction of the same
10 levees taking at least five years, for a total of seven years,
11 subject to local and federal funding availability; and

12 WHEREAS, maintenance of the levees within Bernalillo
13 county, even when reconstructed, is estimated at over two
14 million dollars (\$2,000,000) per year to comply with the new
15 levee standards, and

16 WHEREAS, levee reconstruction and maintenance costs of
17 similar magnitude are expected for levees within Valencia and
18 Sandoval counties;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
20 OF NEW MEXICO that the middle Rio Grande conservancy district,
21 in cooperation with the mid-region council of governments, be
22 hereby urged to form the mid-Rio Grande levee task force to
23 evaluate the current state of the Rio Grande levees along the
24 reach of the Rio Grande within Sandoval, Valencia and
25 Bernalillo counties; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the middle Rio Grande
2 conservancy district, in cooperation with the mid-region
3 council of governments, invite participation from
4 municipalities, local bodies, special districts, state and
5 federal agencies and tribal governments within Sandoval,
6 Valencia and Bernalillo counties to create and participate in
7 the mid-Rio Grande levee task force; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mid-Rio Grande levee task
9 force recognize the existing statutory authority of the middle
10 Rio Grande conservancy district as the local sponsor for the
11 mid-Rio Grande levees and evaluate the feasibility of local
12 cost-sharing; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mid-Rio Grande levee task
14 force evaluate the flood readiness, ownership and maintenance
15 responsibilities for the levees; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mid-Rio Grande levee task
17 force, in cooperation with the middle Rio Grande conservancy
18 district, analyze the economic impacts of impending federal
19 emergency management agency floodplain remapping efforts for
20 the Rio Grande; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mid-Rio Grande levee task
22 force analyze the reconstruction needs and costs, strategies
23 for funding local and federal cost shares, strategies for
24 accelerated reconstruction of these levees and the evaluation
25 of long-term levee maintenance funding and responsibilities;

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1 and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mid-Rio Grande levee task
3 force, in cooperation with the middle Rio Grande conservancy
4 district, analyze the impacts of the new levee standards on the
5 Rio Grande bosque environment; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the mid-Rio Grande levee task
7 force, in cooperation the middle Rio Grande conservancy
8 district, report its findings and recommendations to the
9 governor and the appropriate legislative committees of the
10 legislature by December 31, 2009; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the chair of the mid-region council of
13 governments; the secretary of energy, minerals and natural
14 resources; the state engineer; the chair of the middle Rio
15 Grande conservancy district; the chairs of the boards of county
16 commissioners of the counties of Sandoval, Bernalillo and
17 Valencia; the mayors of the city of Albuquerque, the towns of
18 Bernalillo, Los Lunas and Belen and the villages of Algodones,
19 Corrales, Los Ranchos de Albuquerque, Bosque Farms and Tome;
20 the governors of the Pueblos of Cochiti, Santo Domingo, San
21 Felipe, Santa Ana, Sandia and Isleta; the chairs of the eastern
22 Sandoval county arroyo flood control authority, the southern
23 Sandoval county flood control authority and the Albuquerque
24 metropolitan arroyo flood control authority; the president of
25 the middle Rio Grande flood control authority; the district

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1 commander for the Albuquerque district of the United States
2 army corps of engineers; the area manager for the Albuquerque
3 district of the United States department of the interior bureau
4 of reclamation; and the members of the New Mexico congressional
5 delegation.

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