

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NAVAJO INDIAN IRRIGATION PROJECT.

WHEREAS, in 1850, the United States senate ratified a treaty with the Navajo Nation that committed the United States to legislate and act so as to secure the permanent prosperity and happiness of the Navajo people; and

WHEREAS, in 1868, the United States senate ratified a second treaty with the Navajo Nation that recognized the importance of water and agriculture to the self-sufficiency of the Navajo people; and

WHEREAS, after ten years of intense negotiations among the United States, the state of New Mexico and the Navajo Nation, in 1962, congress enacted Navajo Indian irrigation project legislation to fulfill, in part, the United States treaty obligations in regard to water supplies and a farming operation for the Navajo Nation; and

WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation also gave valuable concessions in exchange for the Navajo Indian irrigation project, allowing water from the San Juan basin, to which the Navajo had valid claims, to be transported to the Rio Grande basin, for the substantial benefit of non-Navajos and that companion project, the San Juan-Chama project, was completed and the residents and businesses of the Rio Grande basin

continue to enjoy the benefits of the bargain; and

WHEREAS, the 1962 act reflected the agreement among the United States, the state of New Mexico and the Navajo Nation, and it obligated the United States to construct and maintain over one hundred ten thousand acres of farms for the benefit of the Navajo people; and

WHEREAS, the Navajo Indian irrigation project was originally estimated to be completed in about twelve years, contemporaneously with the San Juan-Chama project, but forty-nine years later, only approximately eighty thousand acres of the promised over one hundred ten thousand acres have been completed; and

WHEREAS, in 1970, Navajo agricultural products industry, a farming and agribusiness enterprise located south of Farmington, was established to develop the Navajo Nation's economy in northwest New Mexico by farming the Navajo Indian irrigation project lands and engaging in value-added agricultural activities; and

WHEREAS, Navajo agricultural products industry's customers include major food companies in the United States and internationally, and its "Navajo pride" brand has gained excellent consumer acceptance as a high-quality product; and

WHEREAS, Navajo agricultural products industry is a diverse, profitable business enterprise that directly contributes over thirty-five million dollars (\$35,000,000)

annually to the regional economy, and Navajo agricultural products industry-related activities employ four hundred full-time employees annually and one thousand two hundred seasonal employees; and

WHEREAS, Navajo agricultural products industry's future projects include continued crop diversification and a food processing plant that would include modern storage and processing facilities to accommodate customer packaging preferences and peak market demands with concomitant benefits to the Four Corners economy; and

WHEREAS, Navajo agricultural products industry relies on water provided by the Navajo Indian irrigation project to cultivate about eighty thousand acres, but because the overall completion schedule for the project has been delayed by at least twenty-five years, Navajo agricultural products industry is unable to cultivate its remaining thirty thousand acres; and

WHEREAS, the continued delay in the completion of the Navajo Indian irrigation project is causing severe economic and administrative impacts on Navajo agricultural products industry, the Navajo people and the Navajo Nation's plans for a self-sustaining economy in northwestern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the management board of Navajo agricultural products industry has requested assistance and support from the United States congress and the president of the United

States in securing adequate funding for Navajo Indian irrigation project to ensure the prompt completion of the project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it urge the United States congress and the president of the United States to appropriate twenty-six million dollars (\$26,000,000) in the fiscal year 2012 budget for the construction of block 9 of the Navajo Indian irrigation project, and subsequent annual appropriations for the prompt completion of blocks 9, 10 and 11 of the Navajo Indian irrigation project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation, the speaker of the United States house of representatives and the president of the United States.