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SENATE MEMORIAL 3

43RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SPECIAL SESSION, 1998

INTRODUCED BY

Patrick H. Lyons

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE AIR FORCE TO PROHIBIT LOW-ALTITUDE TRAINING  
FLIGHTS OVER NORTHERN NEW MEXICO AND REQUESTING CONGRESS TO  
RESTRICT SUCH TRAINING PROCEDURES OVER POPULATED AREAS.

WHEREAS, a recent marine corps training flight over Italy  
resulted in the deaths of twenty civilians when the aircraft  
severed the cables of a mountain gondola; and

WHEREAS, two years ago a navy flyer crashed near  
Canjilon, destroying his aircraft and causing his death; and

WHEREAS, one year ago an air force flyer with several  
bombs on board crashed his aircraft into a mountain near  
Eagle, Colorado; and

WHEREAS, in the last few years, the air force has  
experienced an inordinate number of in-flight accidents,  
leading to a brief period of suspension of all flights to

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1 investigate the cause of these crashes and review flight  
2 protocols and maintenance procedures throughout the service;  
3 and

4 WHEREAS, public hearings were recently announced and held  
5 to seek information on potential low-altitude training  
6 missions over northern New Mexico; and

7 WHEREAS, northern New Mexico is a populated region  
8 dependent on ranching, farming, tourism and recreation  
9 enterprises such as skiing, fly-fishing, hunting and camping;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, northern New Mexico is the location of numerous  
12 special cultural areas, such as the Taos pueblo world cultural  
13 heritage site; many prehistoric sites; important recreation  
14 areas, including ski resorts, world class fly-fishing streams  
15 and wildlife habitat; religious and ceremonial grounds; farms  
16 and ranching operations with valuable domestic animals; and  
17 historic sites and buildings subject to potential damage from  
18 noise and excessive vibration; and

19 WHEREAS, low-altitude aircraft have caused damage to  
20 property, the health of the elderly and infirm, cultural sites  
21 and wildlife habitat and have placed civilian aircraft and  
22 aerial tram passengers in grave danger; and

23 WHEREAS, the planned flights over New Mexico are by  
24 aircraft from air force bases in Texas; and

25 WHEREAS, the New Mexico economy will not receive any

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1 direct benefit from the low-altitude flights; and

2 WHEREAS, the state's economy may in fact suffer as a  
3 result of negative impacts on travel and tourism;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
5 OF NEW MEXICO that the air force be requested to prohibit low-  
6 altitude training flights over northern New Mexico and that  
7 congress be requested to restrict all low-altitude training  
8 flights of the armed forces over populated areas; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
10 transmitted to the secretary of the air force, the secretary  
11 of the department of defense, the base commanders of air force  
12 bases in Texas and to the New Mexico congressional delegation.