

1 A MEMORIAL

2 AFFIRMING THE STATE'S COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING AND PRESERVING
3 MOUNT TAYLOR AS A TRADITIONAL CULTURAL PROPERTY AND OPPOSING
4 URANIUM MINING PROJECTS THAT THREATEN MOUNT TAYLOR'S CULTURAL
5 AND ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY.

6
7 WHEREAS, Mount Taylor, known to indigenous people by
8 several traditional names, stands as a sacred landmark
9 central to the spiritual, cultural and historical identity of
10 the region's Indian nations, tribes and pueblos; and

11 WHEREAS, in 2009, following significant advocacy by the
12 Pueblos of Acoma, Laguna and Zuni, the Hopi Tribe and the
13 Navajo Nation, Mount Taylor was formally nominated and
14 designated as a traditional cultural property on the
15 New Mexico register of cultural properties; and

16 WHEREAS, the nomination of Mount Taylor as a traditional
17 cultural property recognized its profound cultural
18 significance, including its role in origin stories,
19 traditional practices and ceremonies and as a place of prayer
20 and pilgrimage for indigenous peoples; and

21 WHEREAS, the supreme court, in a landmark 2014 decision,
22 affirmed the validity of Mount Taylor's traditional cultural
23 property designation, reinforcing the importance of
24 preserving the mountain as a monument for future generations;
25 and

1 WHEREAS, proposed uranium mining projects pose
2 significant threats to Mount Taylor and the surrounding
3 environment by physically degrading the landscape and
4 cultural sites with destructive mining operations; and

5 WHEREAS, proposed uranium mining may deplete and
6 contaminate the San Andres-Glorieta aquifer and related
7 aquifers and springs, which serve as primary water sources
8 for the Pueblos of Acoma and Laguna and the surrounding
9 communities, posing significant risks to water security and
10 public health; and

11 WHEREAS, uranium mining operations create environmental
12 hazards through the transport and storage of uranium ore,
13 increasing the risk of contamination of land, air and water
14 resources and exacerbating the health threats already faced
15 by Indian and non-Indian communities alike; and

16 WHEREAS, the ongoing legacy of uranium mining in
17 New Mexico has resulted in long-term environmental
18 contamination, such as poisoned aquifers and negative health
19 impacts on Indian nations, tribes and pueblos and local
20 communities, highlighting the need for stronger ecological
21 protections for Mount Taylor and all of the state's natural
22 resources; and

23 WHEREAS, the protection of this sacred mountain is
24 essential for the continuation of traditional practices and
25 ceremonies and the preservation of cultural identity of

1 Indian nations, tribes and pueblos;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
3 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the senate affirm its commitment to
4 protecting Mount Taylor and oppose any uranium mining
5 projects that threaten its traditional cultural property
6 designation, environmental integrity and sacred status; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate urge federal and
8 state agencies, including the United States forest service
9 and the mining and minerals division of the energy, minerals
10 and natural resources department, to deny permits or
11 authorizations for uranium mining projects within the
12 Mount Taylor traditional cultural property boundaries; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate call upon
14 the United States congress to reform the federal
15 General Mining Act of 1872 to prioritize the protection of
16 sacred cultural sites and to require meaningful tribal
17 consultation in decisions that impact tribal resources; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
19 transmitted to the United States secretary of the interior,
20 the United States secretary of agriculture, the New Mexico
21 congressional delegation, the governor, the commissioner of
22 public lands, the department of environment, the energy,
23 minerals and natural resources department, the Cibola county
24 board of county commissioners, the city of Grants and the
25 village of Milan.
