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SENATE MEMORIAL 5

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025

INTRODUCED BY

Pete Campos

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 11, 2025 "ACEQUIA DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, for generations, acequias have supported a way of life centered around local agriculture and customs of sharing water; and

WHEREAS, acequias are a centuries-old form of water governance in New Mexico that have created a cultural landscape with a web of waterways that nurture tens of thousands of acres of farmland; and

WHEREAS, acequia customs and traditions regarding agriculture, seed saving, irrigation practices and food preservation are important aspects of the cultural heritage of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, acequias contribute to the well-being and livelihood of thousands of families who generate income from

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1 farming and ranching, thereby supporting diversification of New
2 Mexico's economy through local food production; and

3 WHEREAS, acequias and community ditches number over seven
4 hundred in New Mexico with each one governed, operated and
5 maintained by elected commissioners and mayordomos; and

6 WHEREAS, the role of acequias in local governance has been
7 affirmed by laws enacted by the state recognizing acequias as
8 political subdivisions and enabling acequias to have important
9 powers in local water management; and

10 WHEREAS, for more than fifty years, acequias have come
11 together to protect and defend water rights, advocate for water
12 policies strengthening acequia governance and support funding
13 programs for acequia infrastructure; and

14 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia association was
15 established in 1989 to advocate for water policy beneficial to
16 acequias, and the acequia commission was created in statute in
17 1993 to serve as an advisory body in state government; and

18 WHEREAS, hydrological studies by the New Mexico water
19 resources research institute at New Mexico state university
20 have documented hydrological benefits of acequias, including
21 aquifer recharge through earthen ditches; and

22 WHEREAS, as water management is complicated by long-term
23 drought and increasing demands for water, acequias will
24 continue to be important in any decisions about water policy at
25 the local and state levels;

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