A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING HISPANICS ENJOYING CAMPING, HUNTING, AND THE OUTDOORS AND SUPPORTING A NEW MEXICO PUBLIC LANDS CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP COUNCIL TO HELP ELEVATE THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF HISPANIC CULTURE, TRADITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES IN STRENGTHENING THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE CONSERVATION OF PUBLIC LANDS AND WATERS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is rooted in a rich and multicultural history, with forty-seven percent of the population having Hispanic ancestry; and

WHEREAS, Hispanics have a strong connection to the nation's diverse landscapes and practice centuries-old traditions, such as fishing, hunting, farming, ranching and wood, plant and piñon nut gathering, that require the protection of public lands and waters; and

WHEREAS, the Hispano customs of caring for and cultivating the land responsibly and governing water for communities through acequias are foundational to New Mexican heritage; and

WHEREAS, many New Mexico watersheds provide critical water resources to communities, including municipal, domestic and agricultural users, and provide clean water to numerous ancient and agriculturally and culturally significant acequia systems; and
WHEREAS, querencia, or love for the land, is a deeply held value that connects southwestern Hispanics to a past, present and future sense of belonging and purpose, is a principle that prioritizes conservation for future generations and is a pillar of what the group Hispanics enjoying camping, hunting, and the outdoors, more commonly known as HECHO, is founded on; and

WHEREAS, HECHO was established in the southwest and was founded to empower Hispanic leaders to engage their communities in the conservation of public lands; and

WHEREAS, HECHO provides a platform for Hispanic voices to be heard with respect to the protection of public lands, healthy watersheds, clean air and robust wildlife habitats; and

WHEREAS, HECHO, in working toward building a robust public lands conservation leadership council in New Mexico, encourages everyone to join and support this effort and HECHO's mission; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for effective policies that safeguard public lands for all; and

WHEREAS, Hispanics endeavor to continue to enjoy, and practice and pass down, cultural traditions that depend on public lands; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic leaders endeavor to be widely recognized for contributions to public land conservation;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the importance of public participation of all New Mexicans, including Hispanic New Mexicans, in decisions and processes concerning public lands and waters be affirmed by the legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature express support for HECHO in the creation of a public lands conservation council of Hispanic leaders to build capacity and create a formalized network of Hispanic public lands leaders to increase participation and representation of Hispanics in such matters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature recognize the important role that HECHO fills in ensuring that Hispanic Americans and Hispano cultural and traditional uses of the land are included in decisions about public lands and waters; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature recognize HECHO as a group that connects and unites Hispanic leaders to engage their communities in the conservation of public lands and waters and fosters strong, culturally rich communities connected to nature and each other; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, members of the New Mexico congressional delegation, the commissioner of public lands,
the New Mexico state director of the federal bureau of land
management, the director of the intermountain regional office
of the United States national park service, the director of
the department of game and fish, the southwest regional
director of the United States fish and wildlife service and
the regional forester of the southwestern regional office of
the United States forest service.