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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 5

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING NATURAL GAS VEHICLE
USE IN THE UNITED STATES AND NEW MEXICO; REQUESTING A STUDY ON
HOW TO BUILD THE NATURAL GAS VEHICLE MARKET WITHIN THE STATE.

WHEREAS, energy independence and security has been a
national goal that the United States has pursued for over forty
years; and

WHEREAS, the transportation sector accounts for one-fourth
of national energy consumption; and

WHEREAS, the United States has abundant natural gas
reserves, and production is expected to continue to grow over
the next twenty-five years; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a leading producer of natural gas,
and if it were ranked as an independent country, New Mexico
would be considered the twenty-seventh largest natural gas

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1 producer in the world; and

2 WHEREAS, natural gas production is a key component of New
3 Mexico's economy, resulting in revenues accounting for
4 approximately one-seventh of the state's budget; and

5 WHEREAS, on September 14, 2015, a new state energy policy
6 for New Mexico that includes a goal of building the market for
7 natural gas vehicles was announced; and

8 WHEREAS, improving air quality has been a continuing goal
9 of New Mexico's urban centers for over forty years; and

10 WHEREAS, as a fuel for cars and trucks, natural gas
11 provides several environmental benefits compared to gasoline
12 and diesel, including lower particulate matter emissions and
13 reduced release of greenhouse gases in the production chain
14 from well to consumer; and

15 WHEREAS, natural gas vehicles emit less than seventy-five
16 percent of the carbon dioxide and only five percent of the
17 nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide emitted by gasoline and
18 diesel vehicles; and

19 WHEREAS, on December 3, 2015, the United States congress
20 passed the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, also
21 known as the FAST Act, a five-year authorization for federal
22 highway spending that includes many incentives to promote the
23 use of natural gas vehicles; and

24 WHEREAS, programs using proven technologies to retrofit
25 diesel vehicles to reduce particulate matter can qualify for

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1 federal funding under the congestion mitigation and air quality
2 improvement program, also known as CMAQ, and the FAST Act
3 specifically extends CMAQ funding authority to include port
4 facilities; and

5 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a fast-growing inland port at
6 Santa Teresa, which has become a key component of the state's
7 economic growth; and

8 WHEREAS, school systems and municipalities have
9 historically saved money over the long term by using natural
10 gas vehicles instead of gasoline or diesel for their bus fleets
11 due to lower prices per energy equivalent units, greater
12 stability in fuel price and lower vehicle maintenance costs;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, two key obstacles to greater use of natural gas
15 vehicles for large vehicle fleet owners have been highway
16 weight limitations that have not accounted for the greater
17 weight of natural gas fuel systems and an inadequate number of
18 fueling stations along major highway corridors; and

19 WHEREAS, the FAST Act creates a weight allowance for
20 natural gas vehicles on federal highways and requires the
21 United States secretary of transportation to designate national
22 alternative fuel corridors by December 2016;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
24 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that building the number of governmental
25 and private-sector natural gas vehicle fleets in the state

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1 would have significant economic and air quality benefits for
2 New Mexico; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that increasing the market share of
4 natural gas vehicles within the state will help New Mexico's
5 urban and economic centers stay ahead of changing national air
6 quality standards; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it would benefit the residents
8 and businesses of New Mexico for the state to develop its own
9 alternative vehicle corridor plan to be incorporated into the
10 national plan required by the FAST Act; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the energy, minerals and
12 natural resources department and the economic development
13 department be requested to develop a report that identifies:

14 A. how New Mexico can increase the use of natural
15 gas vehicles within the state that includes the current status
16 of the state's natural gas vehicle market;

17 B. obstacles to increasing the use of these
18 vehicles by large fleet operators and by individual consumers;

19 C. the methods being used by other states to
20 promote their natural gas vehicle markets;

21 D. the potential for New Mexico to receive
22 congestion mitigation and air quality improvement program
23 funding and other federal funding to increase natural gas
24 vehicle use; and

25 E. a plan for alternative fuel corridors within the

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1 state; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that in the development of the
3 report, the energy, minerals and natural resources department
4 and the economic development department be requested to consult
5 with members of the New Mexico natural gas vehicle coalition;
6 and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the energy, minerals and
8 natural resources department and the economic development
9 department be requested to present this report to the
10 appropriate interim legislative committee prior to November 15,
11 2016; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
13 transmitted to the secretary of energy, minerals and natural
14 resources, the secretary of economic development and the
15 governor.