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SENATE MEMORIAL 49

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017

INTRODUCED BY

John Pinto and Benny Shendo, Jr.

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 3, 2017 "WATER IS LIFE DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, water is sacred and the essence of all life; and

WHEREAS, two-thirds of the earth's surface is covered by water, and the human body consists of seventy-five percent water; and

WHEREAS, over sixty-eight percent of the fresh water on earth is trapped in glaciers, and thirty percent of fresh water is in the ground; and

WHEREAS, a person can live for about a month without food but only for about a week without water; and

WHEREAS, approximately four hundred billion gallons of water are used in the United States every day; and

WHEREAS, seven hundred eighty million people lack access to an improved water source; and

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1 WHEREAS, water is New Mexico's most precious resource,
2 especially during times of drought; and

3 WHEREAS, New Mexico's water sources are fragile and face
4 serious ecological challenges; and

5 WHEREAS, the Rio Grande, essential to New Mexico's
6 agricultural regions, is polluted by raw sewage and toxic
7 chemicals; and

8 WHEREAS, the national conservation group, American rivers,
9 ranked the Rio Grande as the seventh most endangered river in
10 the United States; and

11 WHEREAS, water has a special meaning to Native Americans,
12 and it is recognized as being sacred and the essence of all
13 life; and

14 WHEREAS, water is medicine and is spiritual to the Navajo
15 Nation and all New Mexico tribes and pueblos; and

16 WHEREAS, on the Navajo reservation, the community of
17 Shiprock and surrounding areas rely on the water from the San
18 Juan and Animas rivers for irrigation; and

19 WHEREAS, on August 5, 2015, an environmental disaster
20 occurred at the Gold King mine near Silverton, Colorado, where
21 contractors accidentally destroyed the plug holding water
22 trapped inside the mine, which caused an overflow of the pond,
23 spilling three million gallons of wastewater into the Animas
24 river; and

25 WHEREAS, the spill has affected the waterways of

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1 municipalities in Colorado, Utah and New Mexico, as well as the
2 Navajo Nation, and remediation is still under way; and

3 WHEREAS, to Native Americans, water is considered among
4 the most important resources because it nourishes the human
5 body, livestock and all plants and animals and deserves
6 respect; and

7 WHEREAS, New Mexico tribes and pueblos are diligently
8 protecting their water rights through treaties, sovereignty
9 rights, adjudications and litigation; and

10 WHEREAS, today, the world's rivers, seas and oceans are
11 exploited, contaminated and mistreated, causing global alarm;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, people must continue to be aware and take action
14 to protect water sources; and

15 WHEREAS, people must look for alternatives and new
16 innovations to maintain and preserve water quality and safety;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
18 OF NEW MEXICO that water be protected, because water is life,
19 it is sacred and it is alive; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 3, 2017 be declared
21 "Water is Life Day" in the senate; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
23 transmitted to the governor, the state engineer, the chair of
24 the appropriate interim committee that studies water and
25 natural resources and New Mexico's congressional delegation.

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