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SENATE MEMORIAL 49

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

Carlos R. Cisneros and Pete Campos

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 5, 2019 "ACEQUIA DAY" IN THE SENATE;
RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ACEQUIAS TO THE HISTORY,
CULTURE, ECONOMY AND MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES IN NEW
MEXICO; RECOGNIZING THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW MEXICO
ACEQUIA ASSOCIATION.

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

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1 preservation are important aspects of the cultural heritage of
2 New Mexico; and

3 WHEREAS, acequias contribute to the well-being and
4 livelihood of thousands of families who generate income from
5 farming and ranching, thereby supporting diversification of New
6 Mexico's economy through local food production; and

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

10 WHEREAS, the role of acequias in local governance has been
11 affirmed by laws enacted by the state of New Mexico recognizing
12 acequias as political subdivisions and enabling acequias to
13 have important powers in local water management; and

14 WHEREAS, for more than fifty years, acequias have come
15 together to protect and defend water rights, advocate for water
16 policies strengthening acequia governance and support funding
17 programs for acequia infrastructure; and

18 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia association was
19 established in 1989 to advocate for water policy beneficial to
20 acequias, and the acequia commission was created in statute in
21 1993 to serve as an advisory body in state government; and

22 WHEREAS, hydrological studies by the New Mexico water
23 resources research institute at New Mexico state university
24 have documented hydrological benefits of acequias, including
25 aquifer recharge through earthen ditches; and

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