

SENATE MEMORIAL 16

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

INTRODUCED BY

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This document may incorporate amendments proposed by a committee, but not yet adopted, as well as amendments that have been adopted during the current legislative session. The document is a tool to show amendments in context and cannot be used for the purpose of adding amendments to legislation.

A MEMORIAL

EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THE USE OF EMINENT DOMAIN TO ESTABLISH  
A NATIONAL INTEREST ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDOR IN EASTERN  
NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, the United States department of energy has  
designated a substantial portion of land stretching across  
eastern New Mexico as a potential location for the  
"southwestern grid connector national interest transmission

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corridor"; and

WHEREAS, the national interest electric transmission corridor proposed for New Mexico is intended to facilitate the development of an electric transmission system aimed at meeting national energy demands; and

WHEREAS, spanning between three to fifteen miles in width, this corridor seeks to pave the way for transmission developers to build vital infrastructure for energy delivery and storage; and

WHEREAS, heavy industrial transmission infrastructure and ~~SCONC~~→dangerous←~~SCONC~~ battery storage for renewable energy could be developed within this corridor and nearby areas; and

WHEREAS, while the designation of this corridor is intended to enhance the nation's energy grid and support renewable energy growth, many are raising concerns about potential risks to local communities and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the designation of this corridor in eastern New Mexico has the potential to adversely affect farming, ranching and small businesses throughout the region, with particular concern over the use of eminent domain, which would grant the government or private entities the authority to ~~SCONC~~→seize←~~SCONC~~ ~~SCONC~~→acquire←~~SCONC~~ land from its owners without their consent ~~SCONC~~→rather than negotiate agreements with owners to acquire more limited lands or rights for the designated corridor←~~SCONC~~ ; and

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WHEREAS, New Mexico's farming and ranching communities are central to the state's economy and cultural identity, providing agricultural products, livestock and open spaces that sustain local businesses, jobs and traditions; and

WHEREAS, the use of eminent domain to acquire land for the construction of transmission lines would force farmers and ranchers to give up valuable land that has been passed down through generations, potentially disrupting long-established operations, displacing family-run businesses and diminishing economic security for thousands of families in rural areas; and

WHEREAS, the designation of a national interest electric transmission corridor in eastern New Mexico would impose significant burdens on small businesses, particularly those in rural areas that rely on the local land for their livelihoods. The loss of land or access to essential resources could endanger the viability of these businesses, many of which do not have the financial resources or operational capacity to withstand the disruption that may be caused by the designation of a national interest electric transmission corridor in eastern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, farming and ranching operations rely heavily on the land for grazing, crop production, water access and infrastructure. The establishment of electric transmission lines, towers and associated infrastructure on private agricultural land could pose a serious threat to soil health,

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water resources and the ability to conduct business in a way that aligns with sustainable practices, leading to long-term financial damage and ecological harm; and

WHEREAS, farming and ranching families are often forced into difficult decisions when faced with eminent domain, including selling off parts of their land or accepting compensation that does not accurately reflect the loss of their heritage, business or livelihood; and

WHEREAS, small businesses in rural areas depend on the stability of their local economy, which is tied to the ability of farmers and ranchers to operate effectively. The designation of a national interest electric transmission corridor in eastern New Mexico could increase operating costs, lead to land fragmentation and reduce land values, potentially resulting in the closure or relocation of many small businesses; and

WHEREAS, the property tax revenues in several eastern New Mexico counties will be negatively affected by the land being acquired by the federal government via eminent domain; and

WHEREAS, the use of eminent domain for transmission projects resulting from the designation of a national interest electric transmission corridor in eastern New Mexico could potentially benefit large corporations and government agencies at the expense of local communities and private landowners, with minimal direct benefit to those who are most impacted; and

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WHEREAS, farmers, ranchers and small business owners are the backbone of New Mexico's economy and should be supported in their efforts to maintain their businesses, protect their land and contribute to the continued success and prosperity of the state; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for comprehensive and fair alternatives to eminent domain that would balance the need for infrastructure development with the protection of local economies, landowners' rights and sustainable agricultural practices;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the senate strongly oppose the southwestern grid connector national interest transmission corridor and the use of eminent domain in eastern New Mexico, as it threatens the viability of farming, ranching and small businesses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate call on all policymakers, agencies and developers to reconsider and avoid the use of eminent domain to establish a national interest electrical transmission corridor in eastern New Mexico and to instead seek alternative solutions that prioritize local economies, respect private property rights and ensure the continued vitality of New Mexico's agricultural and small business sectors; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate urge lawmakers and decision makers to work with impacted communities to develop

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solutions that respect landowners' rights while meeting energy infrastructure needs through collaborative, noninvasive means that do not jeopardize local livelihoods or cultural heritage; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the senate urge the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation to oppose and take appropriate action to prevent the United States department of energy from using eminent domain to seize private property in eastern New Mexico for use as an electric transmission corridor; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the United States secretary of energy, the New Mexico congressional delegation and the governor.

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