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SENATE MEMORIAL 5

43RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 1997

INTRODUCED BY

CISCO MCSORLEY

A MEMORIAL

DESIGNATING NEW MEXICO AS A "DARK SKIES" STATE.

WHEREAS, for centuries, inhabitants of this area have enjoyed, respected and revered the night sky for religious, scientific and mythological reasons, to name a few; and

WHEREAS, the yearning to view and study the universe is as great today as it was centuries ago; and

WHEREAS, the night sky is an inexhaustible resource, and numerous astronomical observatories in New Mexico provide the state with a clean, highly technological industry; and

WHEREAS, many of the national and federal defense laboratories in New Mexico are applying the science of observational astronomy to their research projects; and

WHEREAS, as the state population grows and concentrates itself in urban areas, increased artificial light threatens not

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1 only New Mexico's heritage of vast, starry skies but also its
2 astronomy-related industries; and

3 WHEREAS, artificial light can be designed so that it does
4 not pollute the night skies, is not costly and does not waste
5 fossil fuels; and

6 WHEREAS, conservative calculations show that the United
7 States annually wastes one billion five hundred million dollars
8 (\$1,500,000,000) worth of electricity in uplift from poorly
9 designed or installed fixtures; and

10 WHEREAS, artificial light can also be designed so that it
11 enhances the security and safety of New Mexico's citizens;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
13 OF NEW MEXICO that it hereby recognize as an economical benefit
14 to the state the New Mexico astronomical observatories and
15 laboratories that employ the science of astronomy; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it therefore designate New
17 Mexico as a "Dark Skies" state; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it request the cooperation of
19 public and private utilities, billboard owners, counties,
20 municipalities and others owning or operating outdoor lights to
21 reduce light pollution that interferes with the successful
22 operation of astronomical observatories in New Mexico; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the secretary of economic development and to the
25 director of the local government division of the department of

. 115309. 1

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1 finance and administration.

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