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SENATE MEMORIAL 44

**44TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 1999**

INTRODUCED BY

Timothy Z. Jennings

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION TO APPOINT A TASK FORCE AND, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TASK FORCE, TO STUDY NEEDS OF RURAL RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS FOR MORE EXTENSIONS OF SERVICE FACILITIES IN ORDER TO MAKE AVAILABLE ADEQUATE AND RELIABLE SERVICE IN RURAL AREAS.

WHEREAS, electric service is a necessity that is not fully available throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, electric industry restructuring may be accompanied by system benefit charges and may otherwise impact the ability of investor-owned, consumer-owned and tribal-owned electric utilities to extend service to any remaining unserved and to underserved residential consumers; and

WHEREAS, the public regulation commission is charged with the administration of the Public Utility Act and investor-

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1 owned utilities and rural electric cooperatives have expressed  
2 willingness to collaborate to study the needs of rural New  
3 Mexico residential customers for more extensions of service  
4 facilities to provide affordable, adequate and reliable  
5 electric service to rural customers; and

6 WHEREAS, the study should include potential increased  
7 federal guarantees, loans and grants, the use of a portion of  
8 system benefit charges, which may be imposed on all retail  
9 providers, enactment of an electric service extension charge  
10 and other means;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
12 OF NEW MEXICO that the public regulation commission be  
13 requested to appoint a task force composed of representatives  
14 of retail providers of electric service and other  
15 knowledgeable persons and, in collaboration with that task  
16 force, identify:

17 A. strengths and weaknesses of the existing  
18 sources of funds for extension of residential electric service  
19 into areas of the state that are currently not served or are  
20 underserved;

21 B. alternative or supplemental models for  
22 providing resources to support current retail electric service  
23 providers with an infrastructure to provide such extensions;

24 C. how electric industry restructuring legislation  
25 may impact service to unserved or underserved rural

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1 residential customers; and

2 D. federal and state-level policies and usages of  
3 existing and new funding mechanisms to support existing retail  
4 providers of rural residential service in providing service as  
5 available, reliable and adequate as that in the more urban  
6 areas of the state; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public regulation  
8 commission present a final report by December 1, 1999 to the  
9 legislative finance committee and other appropriate  
10 legislative committees; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
12 transmitted to the public regulation commission, to utilities  
13 regulated by the public regulation commission and to the  
14 Navajo tribal utility authority.