

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 18

47th Legislature - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY TO RECOMMEND INCREASES IN PENALTIES FOR KILLING CERTAIN BIG GAME ANIMALS FOR THEIR HEADS, ANTLERS OR BODY PARTS AND WASTING THEIR MEAT.

WHEREAS, it is illegal to take the heads, antlers or other body parts of deer, elk, bighorn sheep, oryx, ibex, pronghorn antelope and javelina and leave the carcasses to rot; and

WHEREAS, conservation officers and citizens are discovering decapitated bodies of big game animals such as mule deer, elk, bighorn sheep, oryx, ibex, pronghorn antelope and javelina; and

WHEREAS, poachers take from legal hunters who pay for their hunting licenses, follow the law and appreciate the need for wildlife conservation; and

WHEREAS, human beings should be respectful of the animals .153719.1

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they kill and wasting animals is disrespectful and disgusting; and

WHEREAS, uncaring, heartless poachers have been known to kill does and fawns; and

WHEREAS, poachers are defaming the name of the "land of enchantment" and giving a bad name to responsible hunters; and

WHEREAS, citizens should be protected from the heartbreak of discovering the rotting bodies of beheaded and dismembered animals; and

WHEREAS, poachers leaving carcasses of big game animals are fined very little, from fifty dollars (\$50.00) to five hundred dollars (\$500), and may be repeat offenders; and

WHEREAS, the wild friends and other citizens wish to decrease wanton waste and trophy poaching by increasing fines and jail sentences for offenders, adding community service and requiring restitution to the state of the value of the animal killed; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has the lowest penalties for wasting big game animals of all the Rocky Mountain states, classifying waste as a misdemeanor offense while other states have higher misdemeanors or felonies or both, community service and restitution; and

WHEREAS, stronger measures need to be taken to protect New Mexico's big game animals from poachers, who should learn that their illegal actions will not be tolerated; and

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WHEREAS, increasing penalties may encourage people to try to stop this crime if they have friends or relatives who waste big game;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative interim committee that studies corrections issues be requested to study increasing penalties for killing big game animals for their antlers, heads or body parts and wasting the meat; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee consider ways to decrease wasting wildlife, such as increasing fines and jail sentences for first and repeat offenders, creating a felony for repeat offenders, requiring restitution to the state for the value of the wasted animal, requiring community service for offenders and requiring mandatory education for convicted poachers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies be requested to take steps to increase public awareness that unlawful hunters are wasting New Mexico's natural resources and how the public can report these crimes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the department of game and fish, the chair of the state game commission and the director of the state parks division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department.