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SENATE MEMORIAL 11

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2013

INTRODUCED BY

Howie C. Morales

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH HOLD A WORKSHOP TO IDENTIFY FUTURE PROJECTS AND FUNDING TO HELP REDUCE WILDLIFE-VEHICLE COLLISIONS; REQUESTING THAT THE GOVERNOR DECLARE A WILDLIFE SAFETY AWARENESS DAY.

WHEREAS, in 2011, the New Mexico legislature passed House Joint Memorial 10, which requested that the department of transportation, the department of game and fish and New Mexico state police work together to create a traffic safety pilot project to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions; and

WHEREAS, the pilot project, which includes tree and shrub trimming and the installation of traffic signs and flashing lights, is underway on United States route 64 near Chama, New Mexico; and

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1 WHEREAS, roads, such as United States route 64, often run
2 through areas that wildlife has used for thousands of years,
3 and the competition for space poses a significant problem for
4 wildlife on the move, especially large animals such as deer,
5 elk, bear, pronghorn antelope and mountain lions; and

6 WHEREAS, wildlife safety zones that incorporate measures
7 such as reduced speed limits, trimmed vegetation, flashing
8 traffic lights, traffic signs and increased fines for traffic
9 violations, can increase driver awareness and help protect
10 humans and wildlife from unnecessary and brutal injury or
11 death; and

12 WHEREAS, reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions will, in
13 turn, reduce the number of collision-related deaths and
14 injuries sustained by people and wildlife, the number of
15 valuable state game animals lost to collisions and the cost of
16 collision-related medical care, vehicle repair and insurance;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, in Colorado, Idaho, Florida, California,
19 Pennsylvania, Washington and Arizona, wildlife safety zones
20 have proven to reduce collisions and save the lives of people
21 and wildlife; and

22 WHEREAS, the most current information on where and how
23 often wildlife-vehicle collisions occur in New Mexico was
24 developed at a 2003 critical mass workshop and that information
25 needs to be updated; and

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1 WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than half of all
2 collisions between vehicles and large animals are unreported;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, New Mexico youth would like the issue of
5 wildlife-vehicle collisions resolved so future generations of
6 children will have the pleasure of seeing wildlife in its
7 natural habitat rather than only in zoos or dead on New Mexico
8 roads;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
10 OF NEW MEXICO that the department of transportation and the
11 department of game and fish be requested to use existing
12 resources to work with the university of New Mexico division of
13 government research to hold a 2013 critical mass workshop by
14 June 30, 2013 in order to help collect and map current data
15 showing where wildlife-vehicle collisions occur in New Mexico
16 and to produce a list of road segments in New Mexico that have
17 the greatest number of wildlife-vehicle collisions; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the departments be requested
19 to send a joint report on the 2013 critical mass workshop and
20 follow-up activities to the appropriate legislative interim
21 committee by October 1, 2013; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the departments be requested
23 to apply for funding from the New Mexico highway safety
24 improvement program for use in establishing additional wildlife
25 safety zones along New Mexico roads; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the departments be requested
2 to assess the possibility of establishing a citizen road-
3 monitoring program to help the departments collect data in the
4 future; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor be requested to
6 issue a proclamation declaring a wildlife safety awareness day
7 to promote reduced driving speeds for the safety of drivers and
8 wildlife; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the governor, the department of transportation,
11 the department of game and fish and the New Mexico state police
12 division of the department of public safety.