

HOUSE MEMORIAL 35

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016

INTRODUCED BY

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This document incorporates committee amendments adopted during standing committee(s) consideration of this measure. It is a tool to show the amendments in context and is not to be used for introduction, amendment or substitution.

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE INSIGHTS EL PASO SCIENCE CENTER, TOGETHER WITH EL CAMINO REAL DE TIERRA ADENTRO TRAIL ASSOCIATION, ALSO KNOWN AS "CARTA", CERTAIN STATE AGENCIES AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS, WORK TOGETHER TO CONSIDER OPPORTUNITIES AND OPTIONS FOR A NEW MEXICO ENTITY TO ~~TAKE POSSESSION OF~~ ACQUIRE THE INSIGHTS EL PASO SCIENCE CENTER'S MOUNT CRISTO REY PROPERTY.

WHEREAS, the land in and around Mount Cristo Rey in southern Dona Ana county is renowned for its ancient dinosaur footprints and paleontological resources; and

WHEREAS, in order to protect the natural and historical value of the Mount Cristo Rey site, two hundred acres of this property was donated to the Insights El Paso science center, a

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not-for-profit, hands-on science and technology center located in El Paso, Texas; and

WHEREAS, the vision of the Insights El Paso science center includes the establishment of a museum and amphitheater on the Mount Cristo Rey site for the permanent protection of the dinosaur trackways and geologic formations; and

WHEREAS, other prominent features exist on or near the site, including El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro trail; the famous statue of Christ the king, which stands atop Mount Cristo Rey; and the convergence of eastbound, westbound and northbound train service; and

WHEREAS, as many as thirty-five thousand pilgrims make the pilgrimage to ascend Mount Cristo Rey each year; and

WHEREAS, multiple groups of school children participate in field trips to the Insights El Paso science center's Mount Cristo Rey property to hunt for fossils and survey the dinosaur tracks; and

WHEREAS, the Insights El Paso science center has expressed a desire to transfer the Mount Cristo Rey property to a New Mexico partner that is committed to the site's preservation and appropriate development as a scientific educational site; and

WHEREAS, because of the proximity of the Mount Cristo Rey site to the southern boundary of the proposed Rio Grande trail, Insights El Paso science center has recommended its

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consideration as a southern terminus to the eventual Rio Grande trail;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it encourage the Insights El Paso science center to engage in discussions with El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro trail association, also known as "CARTA"; the state parks division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department; the New Mexico museum of natural history and science; the cultural affairs department; the Rio Grande trail commission; the Roman Catholic diocese of Las Cruces; New Mexico state university; and other stakeholders to study the possibility of a New Mexico entity ~~taking ownership of~~ acquiring the property for the continued enjoyment and preservation of the site's natural and paleontological resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these discussions include a review of factors to assess the suitability of incorporating the Insights El Paso science center's Mount Cristo Rey property into the Rio Grande trail; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the executive director of the Insights El Paso science center; the director of the state parks division; the secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources; the director of the New Mexico museum of natural history and

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science; the secretary of cultural affairs; the chair of the Rio Grande trail commission; the bishop of the Roman Catholic diocese of Las Cruces; and the president of New Mexico state university.

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