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HOUSE MEMORIAL 33

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

INTRODUCED BY

William "Bill" R. Rehm

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING CONGRESS TO FUND, AND THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION, THE ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS AND THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY TO DESIGN AND BUILD, AN AQUEDUCT FROM THE MISSOURI OR MISSISSIPPI RIVER TO NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, the San Juan-Chama project is a United States bureau of reclamation system of diversion structures and tunnels for transmountain movement of water from the San Juan river basin to the Rio Grande basin; and

WHEREAS, the project provides about one hundred ten thousand acre-feet of imported water for municipal, domestic, industrial and agricultural uses as well as incidental recreation and fish and wildlife benefits; and

WHEREAS, the project was initially authorized by congress in 1956 and began first phases of operation in 1972; and

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1 WHEREAS, the bureau of reclamation estimates costs of
2 importing water to the Colorado front range from the Missouri
3 or Mississippi river to be one thousand seven hundred dollars
4 (\$1,700) to two thousand three hundred dollars (\$2,300) per
5 acre-foot, or two hundred fifty-three million dollars
6 (\$253,000,000) if one hundred thousand acre-feet are diverted
7 such as in the San Juan-Chama project; and

8 WHEREAS, Mississippi river floodwaters continue to rise,
9 making this year's floods among the costliest flood events in
10 United States history, with estimates of damage from the floods
11 topping one billion dollars (\$1,000,000,000), which is likely
12 to climb; and

13 WHEREAS, diversion of some flood waters would be cost-
14 effective given these numbers; and

15 WHEREAS, New Mexico has been facing a multiyear drought of
16 historic proportions with four times the water rights claimed
17 by users that are available even in wet years; and

18 WHEREAS, the bureau of reclamation and the army corps of
19 engineers have expertise in building water diversion projects;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, the removal of water during flood occurrences on
22 the Mississippi or Missouri river will help protect lands
23 within those river valleys, save insurance money paid by the
24 federal emergency management agency and lower future flood
25 insurance premiums; and

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1 WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature has investigated the
2 western United States and has not found any western United
3 States river with excess water to divert to New Mexico; and

4 WHEREAS, the downstream state of Texas yearly requests
5 additional waters from New Mexico;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
7 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico
8 house of representatives encourage congress to authorize the
9 bureau of reclamation, the army corps of engineers and the
10 federal emergency management agency to complete a water
11 diversion project from the Mississippi or Missouri river to New
12 Mexico and request the New Mexico congressional delegation to
13 support federal funding for an aqueduct connecting the Missouri
14 or Mississippi river to New Mexico; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
16 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation, the
17 commissioner of the bureau of reclamation, the commanding
18 general and chief of engineers of the army corps of engineers
19 and the administrator of the federal emergency management
20 agency.