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HOUSE MEMORIAL 81

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018

INTRODUCED BY

Gail Chasey and Stephanie Garcia Richard

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO BRING
STAKEHOLDERS TOGETHER TO DISCUSS THE NEED FOR DEEPER ANALYSIS,
GREATER TRANSPARENCY AND MORE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN STATE
AGENCY DECISIONS THAT AFFECT THE ENVIRONMENT.

WHEREAS, the creation and maintenance of a clean and
healthy environment are the foundation for economic development
in both rural and urban communities; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article 20, Section 21 of the
constitution of New Mexico, it is incumbent upon the state to
ensure that residents of New Mexico have clean air and water;
are able to enjoy the natural environment, including healthy
fish and wildlife populations; and are free from threats to
human health; and

WHEREAS, nineteen states, districts and territories of the

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1 United States have environmental planning requirements that are
2 similar to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969; and

3 WHEREAS, to make informed decisions about a proposed
4 project, the impacts and benefits of the project on the natural
5 environment and human health need to be understood; and

6 WHEREAS, it is desirable for state regulatory processes
7 and environmental reviews to be streamlined and consolidated
8 wherever possible;

9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
10 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico
11 legislative council be requested to convene a working group to
12 study and discuss the need for deeper analysis, greater
13 transparency and more public involvement in state agency
14 decisions that affect the environment; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested
16 to consider the following issues:

17 A. air and water quality in the state;

18 B. the number of projects permitted each year by
19 the department of environment, the state land office and the
20 department of game and fish;

21 C. how other states approach environmental analysis
22 of state-permitted projects;

23 D. the role of environmental analysis under the
24 National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 in causing different
25 decisions to be made by federal agencies than would have been

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1 made without the analysis;

2 E. the costs and benefits of doing environmental
3 impact analyses before the issuance of permits;

4 F. the streamlining of permitting processes by
5 having the same environmental analysis done for all permit
6 applications submitted for the same project; and

7 G. the current practices of state agencies with
8 regard to environmental analyses and public participation; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in addition to legislators
10 from both major parties and representatives from the department
11 of environment, the state land office and the department of
12 game and fish, stakeholders from throughout the state be
13 invited to participate in the working group, including, for
14 example, representatives of industry, the renewable energy
15 sector and conservation organizations; residents of
16 neighborhoods affected by heavy industrial use; an attorney
17 familiar with public lands law; a public health specialist; a
18 scientist who specializes in air and water quality; a biologist
19 or ecologist; and representatives of Indian nations, tribes and
20 pueblos; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group present the
22 outcome of its study and discussions to the appropriate interim
23 committee by October 31, 2018; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the secretary of environment, the commissioner

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1 of public lands, the director of the department of game and
2 fish and the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.

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