



The Legislature
of the
State of New Mexico

50th Legislature, 2nd Session

LAWS 2012

CHAPTER _____

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 10

Introduced by

REPRESENTATIVE MIGUEL P. GARCÍA

REPRESENTATIVE ERNEST H. CHAVEZ

REPRESENTATIVE HENRY "KIKI" SAAVEDRA



1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO ACEQUIA COMMISSION TO STUDY METHODS
3 OF MUTUAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE
4 CONSERVANCY DISTRICT AND ACEQUIA ASSOCIATIONS IN THE SOUTH
5 VALLEY TO PROTECT ACEQUIAS IN THE MIDDLE RIO GRANDE VALLEY.
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7 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia commission provides and
8 assists the governor, the legislature, the office of the state
9 engineer, the interstate stream commission and the United
10 States corps of engineers in establishing acequia and
11 community ditch rehabilitation priorities and in other acequia
12 and community ditch matters; and

13 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia commission serves as a
14 facilitator for communication between acequia and community
15 ditch associations and state and federal agencies; and

16 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia commission is required
17 to review any plan or legislation affecting acequias or
18 community ditches and comment on that plan or legislation to
19 the governor, the legislature, the director of the New Mexico
20 department of agriculture and the interstate stream
21 commission; and

22 WHEREAS, acequias in the middle Rio Grande valley have a
23 long history dating back to the centuries-old settlements of
24 Spanish land grants; and

25 WHEREAS, the lack of protection of acequias within the

1 middle Rio Grande valley threatens a local culture that is
2 several hundred years old and that has served as the "bonding"
3 instrument for many communities along the Rio Grande; and

4 WHEREAS, acequias in the middle Rio Grande valley were
5 established over three hundred years ago and functioned in the
6 same manner as those in other areas of the state; and

7 WHEREAS, protecting acequias in the middle Rio Grande
8 valley supports the preservation of traditional cultural and
9 spiritual values connected to land and water and promotes food
10 security, food production and health benefits associated with
11 local foods; and

12 WHEREAS, acequias are critical to the preservation of
13 agricultural tradition and are essential for producing fresh
14 local food for local consumption; and

15 WHEREAS, the preservation of traditional culture and
16 small farming in the middle Rio Grande valley is being
17 challenged by potential water transfers from agricultural use
18 to new developments for municipal and industrial uses; and

19 WHEREAS, the benefits from farming within the middle Rio
20 Grande valley potentially amount to nearly one hundred thirty-
21 five million dollars (\$135,000,000) annually, which will help
22 revitalize local communities by creating economic incentives
23 to grow local foods that, in turn, will be distributed through
24 local markets; and

25 WHEREAS, acequias in the middle Rio Grande valley

1 support the vital recharge of the aquifer and protect the
2 habitat of hundreds of significant bird species and biosystems
3 along the Rio Grande; and

4 WHEREAS, several acequias in the middle Rio Grande
5 valley have reorganized under state law to strengthen water
6 distribution, improve water availability for irrigation and
7 maintain side and lateral ditches; and

8 WHEREAS, the status of acequias in the middle Rio Grande
9 conservancy district that have received capital improvement
10 funds from the state legislature has been questioned by the
11 interstate stream commission;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
13 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico acequia commission be
14 requested to study conservancy district powers over acequias
15 within the middle Rio Grande conservancy district; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico acequia
17 commission foster a dialogue that will strengthen the ability
18 of conservancy districts and acequias to meet current and
19 future water needs; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico acequia
21 commission report its findings and recommendations to the
22 appropriate legislative interim committee dealing with water
23 issues by November 2012; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the New Mexico acequia commission, the middle

1 Rio Grande conservancy district, the acequia associations in
2 the middle Rio Grande valley, the attorney general and the
3 interstate stream commission.

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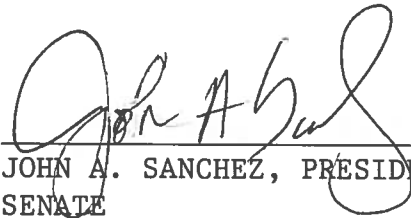
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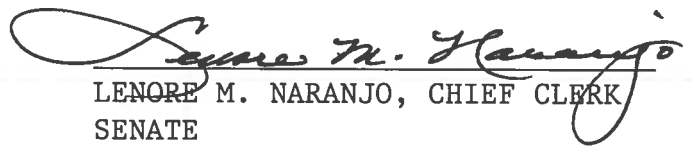
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