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HOUSE MEMORIAL 28

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

INTRODUCED BY

Debbie A. Rodella and Carl Trujillo

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING JANUARY 25, 2018 AS "ACEQUIA DAY" IN THE NEW MEXICO HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ACEQUIAS TO THE HISTORY, CULTURE, ECONOMY AND MANAGEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, for generations, acequias have supported a way of life centered around local agriculture and customs of sharing water; and

WHEREAS, acequias are a centuries-old form of water governance in New Mexico that have created a cultural landscape with a web of waterways that nurture tens of thousands of acres of farmland; and

WHEREAS, acequia customs and traditions regarding agriculture, seed saving, irrigation practices and food preservation are important aspects of the cultural heritage of

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1 New Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, acequias contribute to the well-being and  
3 livelihood of thousands of families who generate income from  
4 farming and ranching, thereby supporting diversification of New  
5 Mexico's economy through local food production; and

6 WHEREAS, acequias and community ditches number more than  
7 seven hundred in New Mexico with each one governed, operated  
8 and maintained by elected commissioners and mayordomos; and

9 WHEREAS, the role of acequias in local governance has been  
10 affirmed by laws enacted by the state of New Mexico recognizing  
11 acequias as political subdivisions and enabling acequias to  
12 have important powers in local water management; and

13 WHEREAS, for the past fifty years, acequias have come  
14 together to protect and defend water rights, advocate for water  
15 policies strengthening acequia governance and support funding  
16 programs for acequia infrastructure; and

17 WHEREAS, the New Mexico acequia association was  
18 established in 1989 to advocate for water policy beneficial to  
19 acequias, and the New Mexico acequia commission was created in  
20 statute in 1993 to serve as an advisory body in state  
21 government; and

22 WHEREAS, hydrological studies by the New Mexico water  
23 resources research institute at New Mexico state university  
24 have documented hydrological benefits of acequias, including  
25 aquifer recharge through earthen ditches; and

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1           WHEREAS, as water management is complicated by long-term  
2 drought and increasing demands for water, acequias will  
3 continue to be important in any decisions about water policy at  
4 the local and state levels;

5           NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
6 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE NEW MEXICO that January 25, 2018  
7 be declared as "Acequia Day" in the house of representatives in  
8 honor of the contributions of acequias to the history, culture,  
9 economy and management of water resources in New Mexico; and

10           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the house of representatives  
11 recognize the importance of acequias in New Mexico water policy  
12 and encourage state agencies to consult with acequia leadership  
13 in decisions that may affect acequias; and

14           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
15 transmitted to the New Mexico acequia association and the New  
16 Mexico acequia commission.

