

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE MID-REGION COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY WAYS TO PREVENT THE BUILDUP OF TRASH IN ARROYOS.

WHEREAS, the arroyos of New Mexico function as natural drainage systems, carrying storm water runoff from mountains and mesas to rivers; and

WHEREAS, natural arroyos are rich in plant life, which attracts native wildlife in search of food and shelter; and

WHEREAS, arroyos in urban areas are the primary tool used by flood control authorities to manage storm water drainage and runoff; and

WHEREAS, in highly developed urban areas, many arroyos have been straightened and lined with concrete to prevent erosion and to control flash flooding; and

WHEREAS, both types of arroyos are often augmented with walking paths and trails, which enhance neighborhoods and local parks; and

WHEREAS, both the functional value and the aesthetic value of arroyos are under threat due to an accumulation of trash; and

WHEREAS, the accumulation of trash and litter in arroyos is detrimental to the environment, is unsightly and leads to costly clean-up efforts; and

WHEREAS, in addition to intentional littering, trash finds its way to arroyos as a result of poorly secured trash and recycling debris, tossed cigarette butts and the thoughtless disposal of a multitude of personal items; and

WHEREAS, trash and litter harm the environment in a number of ways, including by serving as a breeding ground for disease-causing rodents and insects, contaminating water supplies and threatening natural vegetation and wildlife; and

WHEREAS, floating materials, such as plastic bottles, cups, plastic bags and other debris, must be screened out of the runoff from arroyos before the water can be discharged into a river; and

WHEREAS, it is important to maintain the functional purpose of arroyos, preserve the natural beauty and recreational opportunities provided by arroyos that are free of trash and save New Mexico's cities, counties and municipalities the expense of removing litter and trash from arroyos;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the mid-region council of governments be requested to convene a task force to study ways to prevent the buildup of trash in arroyos; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include representatives from city, county and municipal flood control boards, the department of environment and the environmental

improvement board and others with experience and knowledge regarding arroyos and city planning; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that findings and recommendations from the study be presented to the appropriate interim committee by October 2011; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the mid-region council of governments, the secretary of environment, the chair of the environmental improvement board, the New Mexico association of counties and the New Mexico municipal league.