

SENATE MEMORIAL 2

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025

INTRODUCED BY

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This document may incorporate amendments proposed by a committee, but not yet adopted, as well as amendments that have been adopted during the current legislative session. The document is a tool to show amendments in context and cannot be used for the purpose of adding amendments to legislation.

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO DIRECT THE CREATION OF A WILDFIRE STUDY GROUP TO STUDY AND DEVELOP A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO ADDRESS AND MITIGATE WILDFIRES IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico has endured yet another wildfire season, among the most devastating in state history; and

WHEREAS, it is important to ensure that the priorities of

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first responders, local, state and federal officials, utilities, landowners and other stakeholders are aligned; and

WHEREAS, this is an opportunity to prioritize safety, preservation of life and protection of property and animals by taking action to prevent catastrophic wildfires from occurring and quickly and efficiently extinguish wildfires that do occur; and

WHEREAS, these priorities can be more easily attained by providing strategic state support to public and private wildfire prevention and mitigation efforts; and

WHEREAS, a study group would be a collaborative effort to align activities in support of forest management, community protection, utilities and state efforts; SCONC→and

WHEREAS, Indian nations, tribes and pueblos have stewarded the lands of present day New Mexico since time immemorial, embodying an enduring relationship of respect, responsibility and reciprocity with their ancestral territories, which include sacred mountains, watersheds and cultural landscapes integral to their identity, sustenance and traditions; and

WHEREAS, co-management and co-stewardship principles recognize the deep expertise of indigenous nations in sustaining the health of lands, waters and ecosystems, affirming that meaningful tribal leadership in land management decisions strengthens and enhances climate resilience and ensures the protection of resources for future generations; and

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WHEREAS, the enduring wisdom of Indian nations, tribes and pueblos must be centered in the protection of land, air and water, ensuring that indigenous knowledge systems and ecological practices guide policies and management strategies;←SCONC

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to direct the creation of a study group that will include stakeholders to study, develop and make recommendations to the appropriate interim legislative committee for a comprehensive statewide approach to address, avoid and mitigate wildfires, including recommendations for necessary funding and proposed legislation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the goals of the study group in developing recommendations include identifying areas that are most at risk for catastrophic wildfires; ensuring that emergency response plans are developed with stakeholders, including utilities, for the highest-risk areas; identifying the best policies, practices and investments to mitigate wildfire risk, with a focus on vegetation management; providing direct and effective outreach for wildfire mitigation policies, practices, investments and weather-related causation; facilitating collaboration among utilities, first responders, emergency management and incident response, government agencies and Indian nations, tribes and pueblos during wildfires;

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identifying support mechanisms for affected communities, individuals, businesses and utilities in the aftermath of wildfire devastation and restoration of infrastructure; and proposing public policies to support safe, sustainable and affordable utility service to residents and businesses before, during and after a catastrophic wildfire; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group be composed of a minimum of ~~SCONG~~ ~~SRC~~ ~~eleven~~ ~~SRC~~ ~~SRC~~ ~~twelve~~ ~~SRC~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~Sfll~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~eleven~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~thirteen~~ ~~SCONG~~ ~~Sfll~~ ~~Sfll~~ ~~fourteen~~ ~~Sfll~~ members, one each appointed from the following agencies and stakeholder entities: the forestry division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department; ~~SRC~~ ~~the state land office~~; ~~SRC~~ the energy conservation and management division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department; the state department of justice; the homeland security and emergency management department; the Indian affairs department; ~~SCONG~~ ~~the office of superintendent of insurance~~; ~~SCONG~~ the public regulation commission; the New Mexico association of counties; the New Mexico municipal league; investor-owned New Mexico electric utility companies; ~~SRC~~ ~~and~~ ~~SRC~~ the New Mexico rural electric cooperatives; ~~Sfll~~ ~~and~~ ~~Sfll~~ a public member with expertise in wildfire science and technology appointed by the secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources; ~~Sfll~~ ~~and a representative of a state-based property insurance carrier~~

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trade association, appointed by the state forester, after consulting with the office of superintendent of insurance; ←Sfll

and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to engage the forestry division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department to coordinate the activities of the study group, including meeting at regular intervals, and to write a final report detailing the findings and recommendations of the study group; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group be requested to present its findings and recommendations to the appropriate interim legislative committee by November 1, 2025; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council; the governor; the attorney general; the secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources; SRC→the commissioner of public lands; ←SRC the chair of the public regulation commission; the secretary of Indian affairs; the secretary of homeland security and emergency management; SCONC→the superintendent of insurance; ←SCONC the president of the New Mexico rural electric cooperatives; the presidents and chief executive officers of the investor-owned electric utility companies in New Mexico; the executive director of the New Mexico association of counties; Sfll→the director of the state-based property insurance carrier trade association

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represented in the study group;←Sfll and the executive director  
of the New Mexico municipal league.

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