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Water & Natural Resources Committee

Title

Name

Senator

- [Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics](#)
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Matthew McQueen

Representative

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[HJR4 Known as the Environmental Rights, CA](#) providing the people of the state with environmental rights, including the right to clean and healthy air, water, soil and environments, a stable climate, and self-sustaining ecosystems. Could supersede the US constitution transferring ownership of the lands and natural resources to the state through newly created "Trustee"; centralizing complete control of lands, air, water and natural resources to the state for determinations of land use, zoning, and actual ownership.

Sponsors:

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HOUSE ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Legislative Day: 2

Calendar Day: 01/18/2024

Sent to HENRC - Referrals: HENRC/HJC

<u>Name</u>	<u>District</u>	<u>Party</u>	<u>Role</u>
			Chair
Matthew McQueen	50	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email: matthew.mcqueen@nmlegis.gov• Office: 316A• Office Phone: 505-986-4423
			Vice Chair
Debra M. Sariñana	21	D	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email: debbie.sarinana@nmlegis.gov• Office: 413B• Office Phone: 505-986-4435
			Ranking Member
Larry R. Scott	62	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email: larry.scott@nmlegis.gov• Office: 203GN• Office Phone: 505-986-4450
			Ranking Member
James G. Townsend	54	R	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email: townsend@pvtn.net• Office: 125B• Office Phone: 505-986-4758

HJR4 Known as the Environmental Rights, CA (cont)

According to Grok:

The proposed bill in New Mexico aims to provide the people of the state with environmental rights, including the right to clean and healthy air, water, soil, and environments, a stable climate, and self-sustaining ecosystems. It also directs the state, counties, and municipalities to serve as trustees of the natural resources of New Mexico for the benefit of all the people.

Potential issues with the bill could include the following:

- *Ambiguity in defining environmental rights: The bill's language is broad and could lead to varying interpretations, making it difficult to determine what constitutes a violation of environmental rights.*
- *Increased litigation: The bill could open the door to a wave of lawsuits from individuals and groups seeking to enforce their environmental rights. This could lead to increased legal costs for the state and municipalities and could potentially slow down the implementation of environmental policies.*
- *Overlapping or conflicting regulations: The bill could create conflicts with existing environmental laws and regulations, leading to confusion and potential delays in decision-making processes.*
- *Financial burden on the state and municipalities: The bill may require additional resources to be allocated to environmental protection and enforcement, which could place a financial burden on the state and municipalities.*
- *Impact on economic development: The bill's focus on environmental protection could potentially hinder economic development and job creation in certain sectors, such as oil and gas extraction and mining.*

Also, from Grok:

How could the government use this against the citizens of New Mexico and does it impact native American reservations?

- *The proposed legislation in New Mexico aims to provide environmental rights to the citizens and protect the natural resources of the state. While the bill has potential benefits, there are also some concerns that should be considered:*
- *Potential impact on Native American reservations: The bill does not specifically address the impact on Native American reservations in New Mexico. However, given that many reservations are located in areas with significant natural resources, the bill could potentially affect their ability to manage and utilize these resources. It is essential for the state to engage in open dialogue with tribal leaders to ensure that the bill respects the rights and sovereignty of Native American communities.*
- *Financial burden on the state and municipalities: The bill may require additional resources to be allocated to environmental protection and enforcement, which could place a financial burden on the state and municipalities. This could lead to increased taxes or reduced funding for other essential services.*
- *Impact on economic development: The bill's focus on environmental protection could potentially hinder economic development and job creation in certain sectors, such as oil and gas extraction and mining. While this may be a positive outcome for environmental protection, it could also have negative consequences for the state's economy and the livelihoods of its citizens.*

How to email the member of NM Congress:

- ***Use the email addresses from the first page.***
- ***There are two templates to choose from.
Download a copy to your device.***
- ***Fill in the appropriate information based on who you are writing to:***
 - o Enter the current date, your name and information in the where indicated.
 - o Copy and paste the Legislator's address and information into the are where indicated.
- ***You are welcome to change the content as needed.***
- ***Please upload/screen capture your legislator's response to Twitter.***
 - o Tag [America Mission™](#) and the Legislator
 - o Hashtag #BadBills and #NewMexico

Thank you for helping to fight the #BadBills!

~ America Mission™

- [Twitter](#)
- [WebSite](#)
- [SubStack](#)

Subject: Please oppose HJR4 - Amending the NM Constitution to include Environmental Rights

I am writing to express my concern about the impact of legislation pending before you, of which I only recently became aware. This legislation does not provide the Citizens of New Mexico clarity or comfort. When we elect our Public Officials we entrust them with our best interest in mind, and trust that they will carry out their duties in a manner which guarantees all New Mexicans the ability to clearly understand what they have done on their behalf.

HJR4 does not present me and my friends and neighbors with guarantees with respect to our public lands, nor does it adequately address our Native American citizens who enjoy the same Constitutional guarantees as every New Mexican.

It specifically fails in the following areas:

- Attempts to supersede the US Constitution by amending the New Mexico Constitution.
- Ambiguity in defining environmental rights.
- The Potential for Increased Litigation.
- Overlapping or conflicting regulations.
- Financial burdens on the State and Municipalities.
- Impact on economic development.

I cannot support this legislation and I respectfully request that you reject it. Thank you for your time and consideration in this important matter.

Sincerely,
Your name

DATE

The Honorable _____

Office Address

United States House of Representatives/United State Senate

Subject: Please oppose HJR4 - Amending the NM Constitution to include Environmental Rights

Dear Honorable Senator/Congressman _____

I am writing to you because your help is needed to stop a dangerous measure before the New Mexico Legislature with far reaching implications—namely the suspension of the US Constitution. –

HJR4 is a resolution related to the 2023 Water Security Planning Act (SB337). While this act aims to create a framework for regional water planning and protection of water rights, there are several areas of concern that may have long-lasting impacts on our state's water security.

HJR 4 appears to do several things:

1. Redefine the Law of The Land, which could supercede the US constitution as redefined in this proposal
2. Transfer ownership of lands and natural resources to the state (full stop, minus justification given).
3. Creates an entitlement, granted by the state, as opposed to an inherent and private right of ownership
4. Perhaps most dangerous - centralizes complete control of lands, air, water, and natural resources to the state for determinations of land use, zoning, and actual ownership ("trustee" aka management services.)
5. Pre-empt current trustees and title deeds "for the collective good. "

HJR 4 proposes an amendment to the NM State Constitution that could potentially redefine the "Law of the Land" and transfer ownership of lands and natural resources to the state.

One of the key concerns is that the Interstate Stream Commission would be authorized to make loans and grants for regional water. This could potentially result in the misallocation of resources and insufficient oversight.

Additionally, the act does not clearly define the role of regional water planning entities which could lead to confusion and inconsistency in water planning across regions.

The act also does not adequately address the protection of water rights for Indian nations, tribes, and pueblos.

The proposed changes could be seen as a shift from private/individual ownership to state/government ownership, potentially diminishing the power of the people.

Sincerely,
Your name