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Rep. Rod Montoya Scores Important Victory for San Juan County

Bill to ease the impact of San Juan Generating Station closure approved by House Judiciary Committee

SANTA FE—This morning, the House Judiciary Committee passed Rep. Rod Montoya’s (R-Farmington) plan to help San Juan County withstand the planned closure of the San Juan Generating Station.

HB 325 requires PNM, the owner of the generating station, to cushion the devastating financial blow the closure will have on the local communities, especially the Central Consolidated School District, where the facility is located. The bill directs PNM to construct a replacement facility within the Central Consolidated School District provided that the facility costs no more than 110% of the estimated cost to build the same facility at a different location in New Mexico.

Utility facilities like the San Juan Generating Station have a significant economic impact on local communities. They provide high-paying jobs and a strong tax base for local governments. HB 325 ensures that in the future, if a utility proposes to abandon a major facility, the utility must build a replacement facility in the affected community.

HB 325 is co-sponsored by Sen. Steven Neville (R-Aztec) and backed the other members of the legislative delegation representing San Juan County.

“San Juan County stands to lose \$10 million a year in property taxes and 1,600 jobs due to the closure of the San Juan Generating Station,” Rep. Montoya. “While this plan does not address all of the economic impacts to San Juan County, it will at least allow for a 70% recovery of the lost property tax revenue and helps protect Central Consolidated School District’s ability to provide educational services to the Navajo Nation.”

HB 325 will be considered by the full House of Representatives this evening. The evening floor session is scheduled to begin at 5:30 P.M. A live webcast will be available on the New Mexico Legislature’s website, www.nmlegis.gov.

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