



**RE: HB 207 Water Quality Commission Produced Water Rules**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I write in strong support of **HB 207**, which takes an important and forward-looking step to address one of New Mexico's most urgent challenges: **the responsible management of water in a desert state.**

New Mexico's future depends on policies that recognize water as a finite and precious resource. HB 207 does exactly that by directing the Water Quality Control Commission to develop **science-based rules allowing carefully regulated uses of treated produced water**, while preserving strong protections for public health, groundwater, and surface waters.

This bill does not mandate the use of treated produced water, nor does it weaken environmental oversight. Instead, it creates a **structured, transparent permitting process** that allows innovation where it is safe, practical, and beneficial. By authorizing uses such as industrial applications, construction, road maintenance, and pilot projects, HB 207 reduces unnecessary reliance on freshwater sources that are under stress.

Importantly, the bill maintains strict setbacks from surface water and groundwater and ensures that all uses are subject to rules grounded in credible scientific data and enforceable standards. This approach balances environmental stewardship with economic reality and recognizes that **water reuse is an essential tool for long-term resilience.**

HB 207 is especially important because it helps **preserve limited freshwater supplies for the uses that truly require them—drinking water for communities and irrigation for agriculture.** By allowing carefully regulated, non-potable uses of treated produced water for industrial, construction, and infrastructure purposes, the bill reduces unnecessary competition for scarce freshwater resources.

HB 207 also supports economic stability by allowing industries to meet water needs responsibly without competing directly with communities, agriculture, or ecosystems for limited freshwater supplies. This protects jobs, infrastructure, and investment while advancing sustainable water policy.

In a state defined by drought and growing demand, New Mexico cannot afford to ignore safe and regulated reuse opportunities. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **vote YES on House Bill 207.**

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla J. Sonntag".

Carla J. Sonntag  
President & CEO