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SENATOR

ANTONIO "MOE" MAESTAS

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July 7, 2024

Water Quality Control Commission
Harold Runnels Building, Suite S-2102
1190 S. Saint Francis Drive
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87505

RE: Case #: WQCC 25-34

Dear Members of the Water Quality Control Commission:

We write regarding the Petition for Rulemaking and Statement of Reasons filed with the Commission on June 20, 2025 (No. WQCC 25-34) by the Water Access, Treatment & Reuse ("WATR") Alliance, to urge the Commission to conduct a hearing on the proposed rule.

This rulemaking effort fulfills the directives of House Bill 546 (2019), which established the Produced Water Act and amended the Water Quality Act. The Act reasonably allows for reuse of produced water that would not be available to anyone but for oil and gas extraction that produced it.

New Mexico must employ a scientifically grounded approach to explore safe water reuse opportunities while maintaining robust protections for public health and the environment. To that end, the Commission should examine the proposal's scientifically based standards that facilitate reuse without undermining human health and the environment. We must maximize our water portfolio. Safely expanding reuse of treated produced water directly supports these goals.

In addition to scheduling a hearing; I respectfully request the Commission consider conducting the hearing in Jal, New Mexico. Over 98% of the produced water generated in the state is in Lea and Eddy County, with 51% of that water originating in Lea County. No community is more impacted by what is proposed in the Petition for Rulemaking than our neighbors who live and raise their families in southeast New Mexico. I am keenly aware of the divide between southeast New Mexico and Santa Fe. I realize it's a ways but a hearing in Jal would show some class and go a long way toward bridging that divide. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Antonio "Moe" Maestas
New Mexico State Senator, District 26