

Date: 03/11/2026

The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernández
U.S. House of Representatives
1432 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
<https://fernandez.house.gov/contact/>

Dear Congresswoman Leger Fernández,

We write on behalf of community organizations, water advocates, environmental groups, and concerned residents across northern New Mexico to express our support for federal action to protect the Española Basin Sole Source Aquifer (EBSSA), a critical drinking water resource serving tribal nations and communities throughout the region.

The EBSSA was designated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act because it supplies more than half of the region's drinking water and has no reasonably available alternative source. More than 65,000 residents and several Pueblo governments rely on this aquifer as their primary drinking water supply.

Recent confirmation by the New Mexico Environment Department that hexavalent chromium contamination associated with Los Alamos National Laboratory remediation activities has entered the regional aquifer beneath Pueblo de San Ildefonso highlights the urgent need for improved monitoring and coordinated protection of this irreplaceable water resource.

For this reason, we support the **Community Project Funding request for the Española Basin Sole Source Aquifer Monitoring and Protection Initiative**. This project would establish a regional groundwater monitoring and protection network serving tribal governments, Los Alamos County, Santa Fe County, the City of Española, and rural mutual domestic water systems dependent on the aquifer.

The proposed initiative will strengthen groundwater monitoring, improve early detection of contamination, and support coordinated water protection planning across the basin. These investments will help ensure that communities have the information and infrastructure needed to safeguard their drinking water supplies.

In addition, we respectfully request that Congress **restore federal funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's Sole Source Aquifer protection program**. Although EPA retains statutory authority to review federally connected projects affecting sole source aquifers, the mitigation funding that once supported tribal and municipal response efforts has been eliminated. Restoring this funding will allow the federal government to assist communities in protecting designated sole source aquifers that provide essential drinking water resources across the United States.

Protecting the Española Basin Sole Source Aquifer is vital for public health, regional water security, and the long-term resilience of the communities that depend upon it.

Thank you for your continued attention to water protection and the needs of northern New Mexico communities.

Sincerely,

Name:

Title:

Email:

Phone Number:

I certify that I am authorized to sign this: