

James Cobb

Dear New Mexico Environmental Department

On behalf of Local 12-9477, I am writing to express our strong support for the New Mexico Heat Illness and Injury Prevention Act. As the President of a Union that proudly represents hardworking men and women across industries where exposure to extreme heat is a daily reality, I recognize the urgent need for clear, enforceable protections for workers' health and safety.

New Mexico's rising temperatures, exacerbated by climate change, place thousands of workers — especially those in agriculture, construction, oil and gas, and other outdoor industries — at serious risk of heat-related illnesses and fatalities. Without consistent safeguards in place, workers are too often left to fend for themselves against dangerously high temperatures, risking dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and even death.

The Heat Illness and Injury Prevention Act is a critical step forward. It establishes basic, commonsense measures such as access to drinking water, shade, rest breaks, and heat illness training — measures that will not only save lives but also promote stronger, healthier workplaces. Protecting workers from heat illness is not just a matter of public health; it is a moral imperative.

Local 12-9477 stands firmly behind this legislation because we believe that no worker should have to sacrifice their health — or their life — simply for doing their job. We urge the Legislature to pass this act without delay and demonstrate New Mexico's commitment to protecting the dignity, safety, and well-being of its workforce.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this vital issue. We stand ready to assist in any way to ensure the successful implementation of this important legislation.

Sincerely,
James Cobb
President, Local 12-9477