

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVATION OF IRRIGATED FARMLAND, INCLUDING SMALL PARCELS OF PRODUCTIVE FARMLAND, TO NEW MEXICO'S CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, agriculture plays a vital role in New Mexico's economy, with a total value of production exceeding four billion two hundred million dollars (\$4,200,000,000), according to 2012 New Mexico department of agriculture statistics; and

WHEREAS, small family farms accounted for ninety-seven percent of all United States farms in 2011, according to a United States department of agriculture family farm report; and

WHEREAS, a 2012 census of agriculture report shows New Mexico with nearly thirteen thousand seven hundred farms, more than half of which range from one to nine acres in size; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of small family farms are located along the nearly one thousand acequias or community ditches located throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, acequias are historic, integral parts of the culture and heritage of New Mexico and play an important role in responding to the demand for supplies of fresh, local and healthy food; and

WHEREAS, the growing demand for high-value, high-

nutrition, locally grown food is showcased in the growth of New Mexico's approximately seventy-five farmers' markets; and

WHEREAS, small-scale growers have less land and rely on high-value specialty crops that can bring in more money per acre for their efforts than traditional crops like alfalfa; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico state university reports that more young people are joining the state's agricultural community, more kinds of agricultural items are being produced in New Mexico and the number of venues for farmers and ranchers is increasing; and

WHEREAS, farmers' markets foster a strong sense of community where people can talk to the farmers who sell their products;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it be the clearly delineated governmental policy of New Mexico to encourage, support and facilitate the conservation of irrigated farmland, including small parcels of productive farmland; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature find that conservation of irrigated farmland, including small parcels of productive farmland, is significant and important to New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be

transmitted to the New Mexico secretary of agriculture, the secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources, the state engineer, the chair of the interstate stream commission, the acequia commission, the executive director of the New Mexico acequia association and the board chair of the New Mexico farmers' marketing association.