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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING SUPPORT FOR AND ENDORSING THE RESILIENCE IN NEW MEXICO AGRICULTURE TASK FORCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STATEWIDE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR AGRICULTURAL RESILIENCE.

WHEREAS, the agriculture industry is vital to New Mexico's economy and culture; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico state university's college of agricultural, consumer and environmental sciences and New Mexico first conducted thirteen regional community meetings, gathering input from stakeholders in the agriculture industry regarding the most pressing challenges and opportunities facing the future of agriculture in the state; and

WHEREAS, attendees at the regional meetings found that the agriculture industry faces challenges from: increasing competition for scarce water resources; government regulations and policies inhibiting the success of agricultural operations; an aging farming and ranching population; a need for young and beginning farmers and ranchers to enter the agriculture industry; a lack of in-state agricultural processing facilities; a sometimes negative public perception of the industry; and restrictive federal land management policies and regulations; and

WHEREAS, agricultural producers do not set commodity prices, but must instead accept prevailing market prices; and

1           WHEREAS, many farmers and ranchers struggle to sustain a  
2 living from their agricultural operations and must often find  
3 other ways to supplement their incomes; and

4           WHEREAS, New Mexico ranks first in the nation for  
5 children living in food-insecure households, with nearly one-  
6 third of the state's children lacking access to adequate,  
7 nutritious food; and

8           WHEREAS, an increased amount of New Mexico's needed food  
9 could come from local farmers and ranchers, further  
10 benefiting the state's economy, environment and access to  
11 nutritious food; and

12           WHEREAS, several states have developed statewide  
13 agriculture plans to improve food supply and to strengthen  
14 farming and ranching industries; and

15           WHEREAS, it would be beneficial for New Mexico to  
16 develop a statewide agriculture resiliency plan; and

17           WHEREAS, the resilience in New Mexico agriculture task  
18 force was jointly organized by the New Mexico state  
19 university cooperative extension service, New Mexico first  
20 and the New Mexico department of agriculture; and

21           WHEREAS, the task force organizers have invited members,  
22 including farmers; ranchers; agricultural processors and  
23 distributors; cooperative extension professionals; tribal  
24 members; university faculty; local and regional food policy  
25 council members; charitable foundation representatives; water

1 and natural resources experts; and nonprofit organization  
2 representatives and staff from appropriate local, state and  
3 government agencies;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
5 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that support and  
6 endorsement be expressed for the resilience in New Mexico  
7 agriculture task force in the development of a statewide  
8 strategic plan for agricultural resilience; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that support and endorsement be  
10 extended for the resilience in New Mexico agriculture task  
11 force policies of encouraging agricultural infrastructure  
12 development, local food production, agricultural innovation,  
13 funding opportunities and educational support for young and  
14 beginning farmers and ranchers; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested  
16 to develop a strategic statewide agriculture resiliency plan  
17 for future resiliency and job growth in the agricultural  
18 sector; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide agriculture  
20 resiliency plan include recommendations and funding  
21 priorities developed by the task force to implement the  
22 statewide plan; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested  
24 to present a progress report of strategic plan goals by  
25 October 1, 2017 to the legislative finance committee and the

1 appropriate interim committees studying economic development  
2 and water and natural resources issues; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
4 transmitted to the director of the New Mexico department of  
5 agriculture, the president of New Mexico state university,  
6 the board chair of New Mexico first, the chair of the  
7 legislative finance committee and the members of the  
8 resilience in New Mexico agriculture task force.

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