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A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING, HONORING AND CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN.

WHEREAS, more than thirty-three thousand children in New Mexico are living with a grandparent who is responsible for their care and well-being; and

WHEREAS, grandfamilies are often created suddenly in response to an acute crisis involving the parents of the grandchildren, so there is no opportunity to plan in advance for the addition of grandchildren to the grandparents' household; and

WHEREAS, at least fifty percent of grandparents raising grandchildren have incomes below the federal poverty level, causing the addition of dependent grandchildren to the household to place immediate strain on family finances and creating an urgent need for access to resources and assistance; and

WHEREAS, what resources and assistance that are available for grandparents raising grandchildren are provided through numerous different systems and there is no centralized process to access the support that may be available, further increasing stress on grandparents, who need immediate help in navigating the multiple systems involved in providing care for their grandchildren; and

1 WHEREAS, grandparents raising grandchildren face
2 numerous other obstacles, including lack of access to quality
3 behavioral health care services, difficulties enrolling
4 grandchildren in school, possible eviction from rental housing
5 due to the additional residents, lack of access to child care
6 and lack of access to legal services; and

7 WHEREAS, in spite of all of the almost-insurmountable
8 difficulties, grandparents continue to take in grandchildren
9 and provide them love, care, support and hope; and

10 WHEREAS, the grandchildren cared for by their
11 grandparents are New Mexico's treasure, and the future of the
12 state depends on them;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
14 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that grandparents raising grandchildren be
15 recognized, honored and celebrated for their devoted efforts
16 on behalf of their grandchildren and the people of the state
17 of New Mexico; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
19 transmitted to New Mexico voices for children, Pegasus legal
20 services for children, the New Mexico coalition of educational
21 leaders, New Mexico court appointed special advocates, the
22 New Mexico PTA, parents reaching out, AARP New Mexico,
23 Las Cumbres community services, the human services department,
24 the children, youth and families department, the children's
25 court, the public education department, the aging and

1 long-term services department and the office of the attorney

2 general. _____

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