

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 1

45TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2002

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

RECOMMENDING THAT NEW MEXICO CONSIDER NAMING THE SANDIA
HAIRSTREAK THE OFFICIAL NEW MEXICO BUTTERFLY.

WHEREAS, New Mexico's state symbols include the official
animal, cookie, flower, insect, grass, fish, fossil, bird,
question, gem and vegetable, but do not currently include an
official butterfly; and

WHEREAS, adding an official butterfly symbol would add
color, beauty and diversity to the state's array of existing
symbols; and

WHEREAS, at least seventeen other states have official
butterfly symbols, and these states include New Mexico's
neighbors Arizona, Oklahoma and Texas, as well as Alabama,
California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky,
Maryland, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oregon, Vermont and
Virginia; and

WHEREAS, butterflies enhance the beauty of the
environment, and naming a butterfly symbol would benefit
tourism and the economy of New Mexico by bringing attention to

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1 a New Mexico butterfly, by adding credibility to New Mexico
2 among entomologists, which may encourage scientific research
3 in the state, and by providing educational opportunities for
4 study and appreciation of the butterfly and its habitat; and

5 WHEREAS, naming a New Mexico butterfly would enhance
6 awareness of the importance of butterflies, in ecosystems as
7 important pollinators for wildflowers and agricultural crops
8 and promote the conservation of our natural wildlife heritage;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, children love butterflies, and naming a New
11 Mexico butterfly would bring joy to New Mexico's children; and

12 WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak butterfly is thought of as
13 uniquely New Mexican; and

14 WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak symbolizes the ability of
15 New Mexican residents to thrive year-round in a semiarid
16 climate where different years bring floods and droughts and
17 where the terrain is beautiful but rugged; and

18 WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak is one of about twenty-
19 five different species of hairstreaks in the gossamer-wing
20 family residing in New Mexico, and it is small and gold and
21 green in color and it lives in and among beargrass plants,
22 where its pink, lavender and white caterpillars eat beargrass
23 flowers, making the butterfly and its caterpillar easy to
24 identify; and

25 WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak was discovered in
Albuquerque in 1959 in La Cueva canyon and can be easily found
by children among the native beargrass in New Mexico's wide-
open spaces as well as in towns and cities where the beargrass
plant grows; and

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1 WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak, a New Mexico native, does
2 not migrate, but stays in the New Mexico landscape year-round
3 and has not been designated as the state butterfly for any
4 other state;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
6 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the appropriate legislative interim
7 committee be requested to consider recommendations for the
8 adoption of the Sandia hairstreak, a native New Mexican
9 butterfly, as the official state butterfly, which contributes
10 to the beauty, diversity and enchantment of the New Mexico
11 landscape; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate state
13 agencies be encouraged to promote the Sandia hairstreak, a
14 native New Mexican butterfly, as the official state butterfly,
15 which contributes to the beauty, diversity and enchantment of
16 the New Mexico landscape; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the governor, the secretary of state, the
19 tourism department, the state parks division of the energy,
20 minerals and natural resources department, the state land
21 office and other appropriate state agencies; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the wild friends dancers be
23 commended for raising public awareness of the butterfly with
24 their original dance presentation entitled "The New Mexico
25 Gossamer Wing" at the 2002 legislative session.