

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A REPORT FROM THE TASK FORCE TO END HUNGER IN NEW MEXICO ON TANGIBLE STEPS THAT STATE AGENCIES, WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR, CAN TAKE TO ELIMINATE FOOD INSECURITY IN NEW MEXICO.

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WHEREAS, New Mexico has the highest rate of food insecurity in the nation, with fourteen percent of its people having limited or uncertain access to enough food; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico ranks third in the nation in terms of percentage of population unable to afford enough food, with an estimated five percent of its people facing this plight; and

WHEREAS, the governor of New Mexico held a hunger summit on October 16 and 17, 2003 in order to begin to address food insecurity and related issues of food access, distribution and sufficiency within the state; and

WHEREAS, the governor's summit drew upon the knowledge and experience of many New Mexicans, state agencies, nonprofit organizations and the private sector and used resources such as the governor's report "The State of Hunger in New Mexico: Beginning the Plan to End Hunger"; the legislatively approved House Joint Memorial 64 of the first session of the forty-sixth legislature, which requested the human services department to develop a plan to address the underuse of food stamps in New Mexico; and various other privately researched reports, including New Mexico voices for children's "The Economic Impact of Increasing Food Stamp Utilization by New Mexico Families"; and

WHEREAS, after two days of deliberations, the governor's hunger summit identified a number of challenges and problems of food insecurity in New Mexico and articulated recommendations, strategies and solutions to end hunger in the state; and

WHEREAS, the summit resulted in the creation of a steering committee, the "task force to end hunger in New Mexico", whose mandate is to shape and mold these deliberations into tangible steps for ending hunger;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the task force to end hunger in New Mexico be requested to continue its work on these food insecurity issues and report its progress on the development and implementation of tangible steps to alleviate and, eventually, eliminate hunger to the legislature by November 15, 2004; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force involve, use and draw upon the resources and, where necessary, staff of state agencies that are concerned with food programs and agricultural production, including the state agency on aging, the New Mexico department of agriculture, the children, youth and families department, the department of health and the human services department; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these departments commit reasonable resources and staff to the development of this report and to the implementation of tangible steps to end hunger and food insecurity; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force involve, use and draw upon the resources of those private persons, groups and nonprofit organizations that participated in the governor's hunger summit or that otherwise express concern over food insecurity and hunger in the state; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the task force to end hunger in New Mexico, the director of the state agency on aging, the director of the New Mexico department of agriculture and the secretaries of children, youth and families; health; and human services.

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