

A JOINT MEMORIAL

COMMENDING THE VETERANS' SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER AND THE VILLAGE OF ANGEL FIRE ON THEIR PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE A NATIONAL VETERANS' WELLNESS AND HEALING CENTER.

WHEREAS, there is growing evidence that veterans and service members who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan return home with an increased incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression and other health and mental health disorders that severely compromise their well-being; and

WHEREAS, veterans and service members of other wars and conflicts such as the Vietnam War also suffer from these conditions, and they are now beginning to seek treatment for those conditions; and

WHEREAS, the world health organization in 1948 defined health as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"; and

WHEREAS, wellness programs are now becoming broadly accepted approaches to establishing a condition of health in business communities and are recognized in many health insurance products as viable avenues to ensuring health; and

WHEREAS, programs that foster wellness or well-being

have been shown to restore a sense of connectedness and belonging to veterans and service members to their families and communities, and to improve their abilities to function and perform at personal, professional and organizational levels; and

WHEREAS, House Memorial 39, introduced in the first legislative session of 2009, requested the veterans' services department to work with the village of Angel Fire to study the feasibility of developing a veterans' health and healing center in the Moreno valley in northern New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, in response to that memorial, a preliminary plan for a national veterans' wellness and healing center has been developed, which includes identification of a location, facility, corporate structure, economic and other project benefits and financial analysis; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the pressing need for a veterans' wellness and healing center, the village of Angel Fire conducted a veterans' wellness and healing retreat based on a holistic approach that was attended by eleven couples, all of whom reported exceptional value and benefit from attending the retreat; and

WHEREAS, nine additional retreats are planned to occur in 2010; and

WHEREAS, the plan for the national veterans' wellness and healing center will incorporate the retreats as the

treatment modality for the future; and

WHEREAS, the veterans administration post-traumatic stress disorder program endorses this concept and will provide an ongoing source of referrals for the center and for future retreats; and

WHEREAS, no similar program exists in the nation at this time, promising participation from veterans and service members from all over the country as the center is established;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the veterans' services department, the veterans administration medical center and the village of Angel Fire be commended on their partnership to create a national veterans' wellness and healing center; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of veterans' services, the administrator of the veterans administration medical center for post-traumatic stress disorder program and the mayor of the village of Angel Fire.