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A JOINT MEMORIAL

RELATING TO THE RECOGNITION OF A CONNECTION BETWEEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ANIMAL CRUELTY AND DECLARING FEBRUARY 10, 2010 TO BE "NEW MEXICO LINK AWARENESS DAY" IN THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, scientific literature has recognized a connection between domestic violence and animal cruelty for more than a decade and commonly refers to this connection as "the link"; and

WHEREAS, an acknowledged association exists between acts of cruelty to animals in childhood and serious, recurrent aggression against people as an adult with the most aggressive adult criminals having committed the more severe acts of animal cruelty as children; and

WHEREAS, compared to "next-door neighbor types", men prosecuted for animal abuse were five times more likely to commit violent crimes, four times more likely to commit property crimes and three times more likely to have a law enforcement record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses; and

WHEREAS, national and state studies have determined that from fifty-four percent to seventy-one percent of women seeking shelter reported that their partners had threatened, injured or killed one or more family pets; and

WHEREAS, women often reported a delay in leaving

1 dangerous situations because of fear for the safety of their
2 companion animals; and

3 WHEREAS, research shows that a batterer's motivations
4 for abusing women and animals are the same: power and
5 control; and

6 WHEREAS, animal abuse is a "red flag" for sociopathology
7 or psychopathology; in fact, one study found that four and
8 seven-tenths percent of "normal" children acknowledged animal
9 abuse, compared to thirteen percent who were sexually abused,
10 twenty-four and one-half percent who were physically abused
11 and thirty-four percent who were both physically and sexually
12 abused; and

13 WHEREAS, children who witness violence are at greater
14 risk of becoming abusers or victims, and twenty-six to
15 thirty-six percent of children in abusive families are cruel
16 to animals; and

17 WHEREAS, preventive strategies include humane education
18 programs; cross-training among professionals working in the
19 fields of domestic violence, law enforcement and animal
20 control; raising animal welfare standards and strengthening
21 anticruelty laws; being aware and getting to know and look
22 out for the animals in one's neighborhood; learning to
23 recognize animal cruelty; promoting a society that values and
24 respects all living beings; and supporting, by volunteering
25 for and donating to, local shelters for battered women and

1 children and animal shelters; and

2 WHEREAS, the department of public safety in 2004
3 sponsored the first governor's conference on "the link"
4 between animal cruelty and human violence with funding
5 appropriated by the legislature and approved by the governor;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the lieutenant governor in 2006 addressed the
8 third "link" conference with a keynote speech about violence
9 to children and animals; and

10 WHEREAS, the department of public safety in 2009
11 sponsored the sixth "link" conference; and

12 WHEREAS, individuals from the fields of animal control,
13 domestic violence and law enforcement attended the conference
14 to learn more about the issues, to share information and to
15 develop mechanisms for addressing the issues associated with
16 "the link"; and

17 WHEREAS, at the 2009 conference, a group of individuals
18 who attended formed a steering committee to further the work
19 of the conference throughout the period between the yearly
20 conferences; and

21 WHEREAS, the steering committee has begun making
22 presentations to audiences across the state to make them
23 aware of "the link"; and

24 WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature recognizes that "the
25 link" is an important issue for the people of the state to

1 become aware of and address; and

2 WHEREAS, the legislature, as well as individual
3 legislators, wish to make the public and their own
4 communities aware of "the link";

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
6 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 10, 2010 be proclaimed
7 "New Mexico Link Awareness Day" at the New Mexico legislature
8 to honor and remember all of the human and animal victims of
9 domestic violence and animal cruelty and to increase awareness
10 of "the link" between domestic violence and animal cruelty.==

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