A MEMORIAL

URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, THE NEW MEXICO
CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND ALL OTHER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO
ADDRESS REDUCING THE "CLIFF EFFECT" AND ENDING GENERATIONAL
POVERTY.

WHEREAS, everyone should have the opportunity to work hard
and achieve family economic security, and economic independence
should be rewarded; and

WHEREAS, however, some policies are insufficient and
inadvertently keep hard-working parents from climbing the
economic ladder, according to a New Mexico voices for children
report; and

WHEREAS, hard-working families with fewer resources may
need work supports to help them cover basic necessities, such
as food, child care or health care, until these families can be
financially self-sufficient; and

WHEREAS, most government safety-net programs, such as child support, income assistance, health coverage and food assistance, have a "cliff effect"; and

WHEREAS, the cliff effect occurs when a household loses eligibility for public assistance once a family's income surpasses the threshold set by the federal poverty guidelines; and

WHEREAS, in many cases, the value of a lost or reduced benefit can exceed an increase in wages; and

WHEREAS, families often find themselves working harder and earning more but unable to get ahead; and

WHEREAS, the cliff effect is particularly devastating when it applies to child care assistance because child care is one of the most significant costs in a household budget; and

WHEREAS, the cliff effect occurs when an increase in income is enough to disqualify a family from receiving the work support benefit but is not enough to cover the cost of the lost benefit; and

WHEREAS, there are some concerns that increasing income would have the unintended consequence of a family losing child care assistance and other benefits when the family's income surpasses the income eligibility ceiling; and

WHEREAS, the cliff effect is creating a permanent class of workers caught in the dilemma of how to pay for competing
needs, such as food, child care, housing, medication and other essential goods and services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the president of the United States, the New Mexico congressional delegation and all other members of congress be urged to address reducing the cliff effect and ending generational poverty; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government be urged to create policies that would reduce the cliff effect, in support of working families trying to improve their lives and the lives of their children; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government be urged to consider higher income without consequences that undermine families through loss of benefits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal government be urged to address cliff effect policies in all areas of benefits to ensure that a situation is not created that keeps low-income families who are striving to work hard and achieve family economic security from achieving success; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the president of the United States, the New Mexico congressional delegation and all other members of congress.

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