

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT TO ASSIST A COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO AMELIORATING CHILD HOMELESSNESS TO STUDY CHILD HOMELESSNESS IN NEW MEXICO AND PRESENT LEGISLATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS.

WHEREAS, more than eight thousand nine hundred New Mexico children experience homelessness each year; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico Title 1 homeless programs served forty percent more homeless children in the 2007-2008 academic school year than they did in the 2006-2007 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Albuquerque public school district alone anticipates serving over five thousand homeless students in the 2009-2010 academic school year; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico ranked forty-seventh among the fifty states on the national center on family homelessness's state report card; and

WHEREAS, the national center on family homelessness ranked New Mexico forty-fourth among the fifty states on mitigating a child's risk of becoming homeless; and

WHEREAS, children experiencing homelessness are four times more likely to have developmental delays, relative to the general population; and

WHEREAS, seventy-five percent of homeless children under the age of five years have at least one major developmental

delay; and

WHEREAS, children who are experiencing homelessness, or who are living with families at high risk of homelessness, are much more likely to experience physical health and behavioral health problems, such as asthma and depression; and

WHEREAS, children experiencing homelessness are much more likely to have problems in school; and

WHEREAS, many parents do not earn enough money to pay for housing and other basic necessities; and

WHEREAS, a single parent earning minimum wage cannot afford rent on a two-bedroom apartment priced at the fair market value in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico's working families need affordable child care, early childhood development programs, health care, education and housing, not only to avoid homelessness but also to thrive; and

WHEREAS, fully funding programs and services such as high-quality child care, early childhood development, education, affordable housing, medicaid and behavioral health services will prevent children from becoming homeless; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico campaign to end child homelessness is a collaboration to end child homelessness in New Mexico by increasing public awareness about the scope and impact of child homelessness, informing state policies to better address the needs of homeless children and improving

services to homeless children; and

WHEREAS, that campaign is led by cuidando los niños, Albuquerque health care for the homeless, the Albuquerque Title 1 homeless project, the New Mexico coalition to end homelessness, New Mexico voices for children and the national center on family homelessness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families department be requested to assist the New Mexico coalition to end homelessness, in collaboration with members of the New Mexico campaign to end child homelessness, to conduct a study on child homelessness in New Mexico and present a report to the interim legislative health and human services committee, along with legislative recommendations to alleviate child homelessness, by November 2010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of children, youth and families, the executive director of the New Mexico coalition to end homelessness and the governor.