

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR AND NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH AN INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON CHILD HOMELESSNESS THAT INCLUDES THE APPLICABLE DEPARTMENTS HAVING A BEARING ON CHILD HOMELESSNESS, ORGANIZATIONS DEDICATED TO AMELIORATING CHILD HOMELESSNESS, THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR AND THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, during the 2008-2009 school year, an estimated fourteen thousand five hundred children were homeless in New Mexico, and that number is expected to increase during the 2010-2011 school year; and

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

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

WHEREAS, many homeless children end up in foster care, and at least thirty percent of children in foster care would be able to return home if their parents had access to housing; and

WHEREAS, up to thirty-six percent of young people who transition out of the foster care system will experience homelessness at some point in their lives; and

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

WHEREAS, homeless children are sixteen percent less proficient at reading and math than their peers, and less than twenty-five percent of homeless children graduate from high school; and

WHEREAS, ending child homelessness in New Mexico is urgently necessary, and it is possible; and

WHEREAS, up-front cost-effective ways to prevent child homelessness and support children and families who are already homeless will improve outcomes and save money over time; and

WHEREAS, an ongoing comprehensive and coordinated collaboration among all stakeholders is required to ensure effective and strategic distribution of resources to end child homelessness; and

WHEREAS, in the 2010 legislative session, the New Mexico house of representatives requested the children, youth and families department to assist the New Mexico campaign to end child homelessness to develop recommendations to end child homelessness in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, increased coordination and collaboration among state agencies, service providers and community leaders working to prevent and end child homelessness were recommended; and

WHEREAS, a standard protocol and shared system for state

agencies to collect, report and share housing status information on children and adults served was recommended; and

WHEREAS, an interagency council on child homelessness can write and implement a plan to end child homelessness;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor be requested to issue an executive order establishing the interagency council on child homelessness to develop and implement a ten-year plan to end child homelessness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor and the New Mexico legislative council appoint representatives to the interagency council on child homelessness and that the children, youth and families department, human services department, workforce solutions department, New Mexico mortgage finance authority, corrections department, department of health, public education department and veterans' services department cooperate and participate in establishing the interagency council on child homelessness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency council on child homelessness include people who have experienced homelessness and representatives of social service, community and advocacy organizations dedicated to ameliorating child homelessness in urban and rural areas of New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency council on child homelessness report annually to the governor and interim

legislative health and human services committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor; the New Mexico legislative council; the secretaries of human services, children, youth and families, workforce solutions, corrections, health, public education and veterans' services; the executive director of the New Mexico mortgage finance authority; and the coordinator for the New Mexico campaign to end child homelessness.