

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING SEPTEMBER 8, 2011 "EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND
3 EDUCATION DAY" IN THE NEW MEXICO SENATE, REQUESTING THAT THE
4 NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION SEEK AN INCREASE IN
5 FEDERAL FUNDING AND REQUESTING POLICYMAKERS TO SEEK FUNDING
6 FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO ENSURE
7 THAT ALL NEW MEXICO CHILDREN GET ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY EARLY
8 CHILDHOOD SERVICES.

9
10 WHEREAS, according to the national scientific council on
11 the developing child, babies' brain development is rapid and
12 the architecture that lays the foundation for future success
13 is shaped before children enter kindergarten; and

14 WHEREAS, many new parents need skills and support to
15 learn how to foster brain development and provide high-
16 quality interactions as children's first teachers; and

17 WHEREAS, according to the United States department of
18 education, New Mexico ranks forty-ninth in the United States
19 for the percentage of fourth graders who read proficiently;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, the Annie E. Casey foundation reports that New
22 Mexico ranks forty-seventh in the United States for the
23 percentage of teens who do not finish high school; and

24 WHEREAS, according to a recent United States census
25 study, fifty-one percent of New Mexico's children live in

1 low-income households; and

2 WHEREAS, poverty is a key risk factor for a child's
3 achievement in school, and educational attainment is a key
4 determinant to a child's future economic security; and

5 WHEREAS, evaluations by Rutgers university of high-
6 quality early learning programs show that they improve
7 outcomes for children in elementary and secondary schools;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, prevention is more effective and less costly
10 than remediation; and

11 WHEREAS, research published in the *Journal of Public*
12 *Economics* by noted economists shows that investing in early
13 childhood development for disadvantaged children and their
14 families provides a ten percent return on investment each
15 year throughout the child's life through increased personal
16 achievement and social productivity; and

17 WHEREAS, less than twenty percent of children from birth
18 to age five have access to New Mexico's early childhood
19 programs, including home visiting, high-quality child care
20 and the New Mexico pre-kindergarten program, which helps
21 children to be ready to learn in school; and

22 WHEREAS, funding for early childhood services accounts
23 for less than one percent of the state's general fund budget
24 and, overall, the amount of federal and state funding
25 available to children and families has been reduced over the

1 last three years; and

2 WHEREAS, only five percent of families with newborn
3 babies get state-funded services that provide parent coaching
4 or home visiting; and

5 WHEREAS, the state's most recent pre-kindergarten
6 program evaluation showed measurable gains in literacy and
7 mathematics skills for children who participated in child
8 care assistance programs; and

9 WHEREAS, only sixteen percent of New Mexico's four-year-
10 olds had access to participate in child care assistance
11 programs during the 2010-2011 school year; and

12 WHEREAS, funding for child care assistance programs in
13 the state was reduced by twenty-three percent between fiscal
14 years 2011 and 2012; and

15 WHEREAS, since fiscal year 2010, the state has reduced
16 payments to child care providers and has increased parents'
17 copayments; and

18 WHEREAS, more than sixty-eight percent of New Mexico
19 families with children rely on child care to work or attend
20 school, and eligibility for child care assistance has been
21 reduced so that six thousand children are on the state's
22 waiting list for child care assistance;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
24 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that September 8, 2011 be declared "Early
25 Childhood Care and Education Day" in the senate; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that New Mexico's congressional
2 delegation be requested to seek increased federal funding for
3 early childhood care and education in the state; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that policymakers be requested to
5 ensure that all New Mexico children get access to
6 high-quality early childhood care and education programs and
7 services that will provide them with the opportunity to
8 thrive and find success in school and become productive
9 members of their communities; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that high-quality early childhood
11 care and education programs and services be recognized as
12 critically important to the health, well being and economic
13 vitality of all New Mexico communities; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the communities and
15 organizations that are currently providing high-quality early
16 childhood care and education be commended; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state agencies and tribal,
18 county, municipal and other governmental entities be urged to
19 support the improvement of the accessibility and quality of
20 early childhood care and education services; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
22 transmitted to the governor and to the members of New Mexico's
23 congressional delegation. _____

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