

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 28

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT AND THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO PROVIDE CRITICAL ASSISTANCE TO ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF FARMS AND COMPANIES THAT GROW, PROCESS, SELL AND SERVE NEW MEXICO CHILE PEPPERS AND NEW MEXICO CHILE PEPPER PRODUCTS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is recognized for having the best tasting chile in the United States; and

WHEREAS, New Mexicans take great pride in New Mexico chile as a culinary treasure; and

WHEREAS, chile is recognized as the state vegetable, and "red or green?" is the state question; and

WHEREAS, chile is to New Mexico what the potato is to Idaho and the orange is to Florida; and

WHEREAS, the tourism department features red and green

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1 chiles as symbols for New Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, according to the New Mexico chile association,
3 chile pepper production provides approximately four thousand
4 full- and part-time jobs and contributes about four hundred
5 sixty-five million dollars (\$465,000,000) annually to the New
6 Mexico economy; and

7 WHEREAS, the chile industry is a home-grown, largely rural
8 industry that has existed in New Mexico's Rio Grande valley for
9 over four centuries; and

10 WHEREAS, New Mexico's chile acreage has declined by
11 two-thirds from its peak in 1992, when thirty-four thousand
12 five hundred acres were grown in New Mexico, to 2008, when only
13 eleven thousand one hundred acres were grown in the state,
14 according to the national agricultural statistics service; and

15 WHEREAS, according to a 2009 survey conducted by research
16 and polling, incorporated, ninety-two percent of New Mexico
17 chile consumers are concerned about the decline in chile
18 acreage across the state; and

19 WHEREAS, about eighty percent of chile consumed in the
20 United States is foreign grown and imported, according to
21 *Western Farm Press*, with chile primarily coming from Mexico,
22 Peru, China and India; and

23 WHEREAS, the research and polling, incorporated survey
24 reports that seventy-three percent of respondents say it is
25 very important that the chile they purchase is grown in New

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1 Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, this same survey indicates that ninety percent of
3 New Mexico chile consumers agree that officials should do
4 everything in their power to ensure that chile continues to be
5 processed and grown in New Mexico; and

6 WHEREAS, foreign competitors have captured much of New
7 Mexico's market share of chile products because of their
8 advantageous regulatory environment and plentiful, cheap labor;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, according to the New Mexico chile association,
11 while consumption of chile is skyrocketing in the United
12 States, New Mexico's production of chile is in steep decline;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, the farmers and producers who comprise the New
15 Mexico chile industry must regain competitiveness to retake
16 market share of the growing market for chile peppers;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
18 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the economic development department,
19 the tourism department and the New Mexico department of
20 agriculture be requested to provide critical assistance to
21 encourage the development of farms and companies that grow,
22 process, sell and serve New Mexico chile peppers and New Mexico
23 chile pepper products; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the secretary of economic development, the

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1 secretary of tourism and the director of the New Mexico
2 department of agriculture.

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