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SENATE MEMORIAL 10

**50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012**

INTRODUCED BY

Cynthia Nava

A MEMORIAL

SUPPORTING THE IDEA THAT EVERY NEW MEXICO CHILD SHOULD HAVE  
AMPLE OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITIES USING EXISTING RESOURCES.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a state rich in diverse natural  
resources and wildlife as well as outstanding natural areas  
that provide residents with a wide variety of outdoor  
recreation opportunities; and

WHEREAS, a growing body of research and literature  
indicates that being in nature is increasingly important for  
children, especially for children raised in highly  
industrialized urban environments; and

WHEREAS, outdoor activity in natural environments has the  
potential to improve children's mental health and physical  
well-being or, in the words of one student, "we need to get  
more air and oxygen, which fuels our bodies and helps us

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1 think"; and

2 WHEREAS, an increase in outdoor school activities can  
3 increase student attendance, focus, enthusiasm for school and  
4 academic performance and reduce negative behaviors; and

5 WHEREAS, outdoor activities can reduce obesity and  
6 diabetes in New Mexico where one-third of our children are  
7 overweight and where diabetes rates jumped forty percent from  
8 1990 through 2000; and

9 WHEREAS, teens and young adults have one of the highest  
10 rates of unemployment and would benefit from volunteer and  
11 other job training opportunities in outdoor and natural  
12 resources fields; and

13 WHEREAS, taking care of natural resources and forming good  
14 stewardship habits at an early age are important aspects of  
15 learning to care for the world around us and to work for  
16 positive change; and

17 WHEREAS, the wonder and joy of discovery in nature is a  
18 fundamental childhood experience and promotes mental and  
19 physical health, academic achievement, future economic success,  
20 civic engagement and environmental literacy;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE  
22 LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it support the idea  
23 that every New Mexico child should have the opportunity to:

- 24 A. play outside and explore freely;  
25 B. watch wildlife in the outdoors;

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- 1 C. wade in a river, creek, lake or pond;
- 2 D. catch a fish and hunt for food;
- 3 E. camp out under the stars;
- 4 F. plant a seed and visit farms and ranches;
- 5 G. hike a trail;
- 6 H. explore public parks, open spaces, nature
- 7 centers and wildlife sanctuaries;
- 8 I. actively care for land, water and wildlife;
- 9 J. dig in the dirt and learn about the world from
- 10 the ground up; and
- 11 K. use their imaginations to draw, dance, sing and
- 12 play outdoors; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the children, youth and  
14 families department, the state parks division of the energy,  
15 minerals and natural resources department, the department of  
16 game and fish, the public education department, the state land  
17 office, the tourism department and the department of health be  
18 encouraged to develop and advertise outdoor programs for  
19 children, including opportunities on New Mexico state-owned  
20 lands, activities in and around schools such as outdoor  
21 gardening and increased physical education and outdoor and  
22 natural resource job and skills training; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
24 transmitted to the governor, the children, youth and families  
25 department, the state parks division of the energy, minerals

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1 and natural resources department, the department of game and  
2 fish, the public education department, the state land office,  
3 the tourism department and the department of health.

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