

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A LITERATURE SEARCH OF SCIENTIFIC STUDIES OF PARKINSON'S DISEASE AND PESTICIDE EXPOSURE AND TO SUPPORT FEDERAL LEGISLATION THAT WOULD AUTHORIZE THE FEDERAL CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION TO GATHER DATA ON PARKINSON'S DISEASE AND REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO STUDY THE HISTORIC USE OF AGRICULTURAL PESTICIDES IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, Parkinson's disease is a chronic and progressive neurological disease that is the result of the loss of dopamine-producing brain cells; and

WHEREAS, there is no cure, therapy or drug to slow or halt the progression of Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, it is unknown how many Americans, or how many New Mexicans, live with Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, the department of health must rely upon death certificates to tabulate death rates due to Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, there is no other data source in New Mexico to estimate the prevalence of Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico's Parkinson's disease-related death rate is thirteen and four-tenths per one hundred thousand population; and

WHEREAS, national legislation has been proposed to amend

the federal Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of permanent national surveillance systems to track the epidemiology of certain neurological diseases, including Parkinson's disease, and to facilitate further research on these diseases; and

WHEREAS, environmental exposure to pesticides has long been suspected of playing a role in causing Parkinson's disease; and

WHEREAS, occupational exposure to pesticides often occurs in the case of agricultural workers in open fields and greenhouses; and

WHEREAS, low-level chronic exposure of the general population to pesticides occurs primarily through eating food and drinking water contaminated with pesticide residues; and

WHEREAS, risk assessment of the impact of pesticides on human health is not an easy or accurate process due to differences in duration and level of exposure; and

WHEREAS, southwestern New Mexico has a large agricultural sector, and it is important that agricultural workers know which pesticides they have been, and are being, exposed to; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico department of agriculture regulates the agricultural use of pesticides;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico

department of agriculture be requested to study the historic use of agricultural pesticides in New Mexico and to provide its findings to the department of health; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be requested, upon review of the data submitted by the New Mexico department of agriculture, and of the pertinent scientific literature on the relationship of pesticide use and the development of Parkinson's disease, to prepare a report assessing the risk of pertinent populations of New Mexicans, with recommendations as appropriate; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico department of agriculture and the department of health be requested to present the results of their studies to the legislative health and human services committee by September 1, 2013; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be requested to write New Mexico's congressional delegation in support of national legislation to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of permanent national surveillance systems to track the epidemiology of certain neurological diseases, including Parkinson's disease, and to facilitate further research on these diseases; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of health, to the director of the New Mexico department of agriculture and to the Parkinson's action network.