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SENATE MEMORIAL 96

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

Carlos R. Cisneros

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSERVATION OF IRRIGATED FARMLAND, INCLUDING SMALL PARCELS OF PRODUCTIVE FARMLAND, TO NEW MEXICO'S CULTURAL HERITAGE AND ECONOMY.

WHEREAS, agriculture plays a vital role in New Mexico's economy, with a total value of production exceeding four billion two hundred million dollars (\$4,200,000,000), according to 2012 New Mexico department of agriculture statistics; and

WHEREAS, small family farms accounted for ninety-seven percent of all United States farms in 2011, according to a United States department of agriculture family farm report; and

WHEREAS, a 2012 census of agriculture report shows New Mexico with nearly thirteen thousand seven hundred farms, more than half of which range from one to nine acres in size; and

WHEREAS, a significant number of small family farms are

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1 located along the nearly one thousand acequias or community
2 ditches located throughout the state; and

3 WHEREAS, acequias are historic, integral parts of the
4 culture and heritage of New Mexico and play an important role
5 in responding to the demand for supplies of fresh, local and
6 healthy food; and

7 WHEREAS, the growing demand for high-value, high-
8 nutrition, locally grown food is showcased in the growth of New
9 Mexico's approximately seventy-five farmers' markets; and

10 WHEREAS, small-scale growers have less land and rely on
11 high-value specialty crops that can bring in more money per
12 acre for their efforts than traditional crops like alfalfa; and

13 WHEREAS, New Mexico state university reports that more
14 young people are joining the state's agricultural community,
15 more kinds of agricultural items are being produced in New
16 Mexico and the number of venues for farmers and ranchers is
17 increasing; and

18 WHEREAS, farmers' markets foster a strong sense of
19 community where people can talk to the farmers who sell their
20 products;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
22 OF NEW MEXICO that it be the clearly delineated governmental
23 policy of New Mexico to encourage, support and facilitate the
24 conservation of irrigated farmland, including small parcels of
25 productive farmland; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislature find that
2 conservation of irrigated farmland, including small parcels of
3 productive farmland, is significant and important to New
4 Mexico; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the New Mexico secretary of agriculture, the
7 secretary of energy, minerals and natural resources, the state
8 engineer, the chair of the interstate stream commission, the
9 acequia commission, the executive director of the New Mexico
10 acequia association and the board chair of the New Mexico
11 farmers' marketing association.