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SENATE MEMORIAL 91

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

Linda M. Lopez and Richard C. Martinez

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING, HONORING AND CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN.

WHEREAS, more than thirty-three thousand children in New Mexico are living with a grandparent who is responsible for their care and well-being; and

WHEREAS, grandfamilies are often created suddenly in response to an acute crisis involving the parents of the grandchildren, so there is no opportunity to plan in advance for the addition of grandchildren to the grandparents' household; and

WHEREAS, at least fifty percent of grandparents raising grandchildren have incomes below the federal poverty level, causing the addition of dependent grandchildren to the household to place immediate strain on family finances and

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1 creating an urgent need for access to resources and assistance;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, what resources and assistance that are available
4 for grandparents raising grandchildren are provided through
5 numerous different systems and there is no centralized process
6 to access the support that may be available, further increasing
7 stress on grandparents, who need immediate help in navigating
8 the multiple systems involved in providing care for their
9 grandchildren; and

10 WHEREAS, grandparents raising grandchildren face numerous
11 other obstacles, including lack of access to quality behavioral
12 health care services, difficulties enrolling grandchildren in
13 school, possible eviction from rental housing due to the
14 additional residents, lack of access to child care and lack of
15 access to legal services; and

16 WHEREAS, in spite of all of the almost-insurmountable
17 difficulties, grandparents continue to take in grandchildren
18 and provide them love, care, support and hope; and

19 WHEREAS, the grandchildren cared for by their grandparents
20 are New Mexico's treasure, and the future of the state depends
21 on them;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
23 OF NEW MEXICO that grandparents raising grandchildren be
24 recognized, honored and celebrated for their devoted efforts on
25 behalf of their grandchildren and the people of the state of

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New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to New Mexico voices for children, Pegasus legal services for children, the New Mexico coalition of educational leaders, New Mexico court appointed special advocates, the New Mexico PTA, parents reaching out, AARP New Mexico, Las Cumbres community services, the human services department, the children, youth and families department, the children's court, the public education department, the aging and long-term services department and the office of the attorney general.