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A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 6, 2020 "NEW MEXICO FOOD AND FARMS AND SCHOOL NUTRITION DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, New Mexico has a vibrant food and farming culture that is significant to the rural economy and provides employment opportunities on farms; in direct, wholesale and retail outlets; and in food processing, distribution and value-added business; and

WHEREAS, studies have shown that for every one dollar (\$1.00) that goes to local agricultural producers, one dollar eighty cents (\$1.80) is circulated in the local economy; and

WHEREAS, if New Mexico consumers purchased only fifteen percent of their food from the state's farmers and ranchers, annual farm income would increase by three hundred ninety-two million dollars (\$392,000,000); and

WHEREAS, an investment in children's health will help stem the rise in childhood obesity in New Mexico, where thirty-two percent of children are overweight or obese; and

WHEREAS, the 2017 "Map the Meal Gap" report from the national anti-hunger organization feeding America indicates that twenty-four percent of children, or one hundred twenty-five thousand two hundred ten children in New Mexico, are at risk for hunger; and

WHEREAS, school nutrition programs provided through the

1 national school lunch program, school breakfast program and
2 summer foodservice program have provided millions of healthy
3 and nutritious meals to school children throughout New Mexico
4 for more than seventy years; and

5 WHEREAS, school nutrition and summer meal programs serve
6 healthy meals, free or at low cost, to students in New Mexico
7 schools; and

8 WHEREAS, school nutrition programs not only feed hungry
9 children and support family well-being but also act as
10 "economic stabilizers" during economic downturns; and

11 WHEREAS, many children consume at least one-half of
12 their daily calories at school, and for many children, food
13 served at school is the only food they eat daily; and

14 WHEREAS, increased investment from the legislature
15 enables schools to feature New Mexico-grown produce, meet
16 federal nutrition requirements, serve more fresh fruits and
17 vegetables to children and support economic development
18 opportunities for local farmers, entrepreneurs and
19 communities; and

20 WHEREAS, over the last seven years, more than fifty-
21 eight school food authorities have purchased New Mexico-grown
22 produce for school meals with state funds, enhancing the
23 diets of three hundred thirty-three thousand three hundred
24 students, promoting healthier lifestyles and increasing
25 academic achievement, while close to two million dollars

1 (\$2,000,000) has benefited New Mexico's farming economy; and

2 WHEREAS, seventy farmers' markets are providing
3 New Mexico products to forty-five thousand people each week
4 in thirty-two counties by direct sales and through the
5 supplemental nutrition assistance program, the special
6 supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and
7 children and the senior farmers' market nutrition program,
8 creating fresh food access for low-income individuals and
9 resulting in annual gross sales to farmers of close to eight
10 million dollars (\$8,000,000) in 2019; and

11 WHEREAS, eighty double up food bucks outlets, including
12 farmers' markets, grocery stores, farm stands and mobile
13 markets, are making it more affordable for supplemental
14 nutrition assistance program participants across the state to
15 increase the amount of fresh, New Mexico-grown produce they
16 eat while providing nine hundred seventy New Mexico farmers
17 with more than one million dollars (\$1,000,000) in electronic
18 benefits transfer sales during 2018; and

19 WHEREAS, a healthier population will help save the state
20 an additional three hundred twenty-four million dollars
21 (\$324,000,000) in obesity-related health care expenses and an
22 additional one billion two hundred million dollars
23 (\$1,200,000,000) in diabetes-related health care expenses;
24 and

25 WHEREAS, creating food hubs, produce processing and

1 distribution centers and community kitchens could accelerate
2 the economic growth of farmers and rural food entrepreneurs;
3 and

4 WHEREAS, the growing number of New Mexico community and
5 school gardens provides an important way for children and
6 families to engage in growing food and provides a way for
7 children to learn about nutrition and life sciences; and

8 WHEREAS, to achieve these goals, agricultural-, health-
9 and education-related organizations and agencies help
10 coordinate programs and make connections among health, the
11 built environment and policies through the support of
12 organizations such as food policy councils, health councils,
13 health equity partnerships, foodcorps, Americorps, 4-H, farm
14 to school programs and others;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
16 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state recognize that the time
17 has come to invest in New Mexico's children, economy and
18 future; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that February 6, 2020 be declared
20 "New Mexico Food and Farms and School Nutrition Day" in the
21 senate; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
23 transmitted to the executive director of the New Mexico
24 farmers' marketing association. _____