

1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 AFFIRMING THE IMPORTANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION;
3 REQUESTING THE DECLARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION WEEK
4 AND REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH AND THE
5 NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE LEAD A STUDY FOR A GRANT
6 PROGRAM TO INCREASE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR
7 STUDENTS.

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9 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a rich cultural history of
10 environmental stewardship, which should be continued into the
11 future; and

12 WHEREAS, environmental education provides an effective
13 means to teach common core state standards and next
14 generation science standards, and environmental education
15 increases student achievement in all fields of study; and

16 WHEREAS, environmental education provides a theme for
17 interdisciplinary, project- and place-based learning that
18 enhances critical thinking skills, promotes student
19 engagement in learning and creates a stronger connection to
20 the land of New Mexico; and

21 WHEREAS, much of environmental education content falls
22 squarely into the subjects of science, technology,
23 engineering and mathematics, each of which provides a
24 high-priority focus for education; and

25 WHEREAS, a growing body of research and literature

1 indicates that being in nature is increasingly important for
2 children, especially for children raised in highly
3 industrialized urban environments; and

4 WHEREAS, outdoor education has been shown to increase
5 student focus and reduce symptoms of attention deficit
6 disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and

7 WHEREAS, school gardens and wildlife habitats provide
8 school-based laboratories for science education and other
9 studies and generate greater community support for school
10 sites; and

11 WHEREAS, growing food at school increases nutritional
12 knowledge, promotes a healthful lifestyle and reduces
13 childhood obesity; and

14 WHEREAS, the New Mexico environmental literacy plan was
15 developed by more than three hundred teachers and non-formal
16 educators to provide guidelines for teaching quality
17 environmental education both inside the classroom and out of
18 doors; and

19 WHEREAS, environmental education leads to an
20 environmentally literate citizenry that makes sound and
21 effective decisions in a range of contexts and situations;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
23 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the importance of environmental
24 education that contributes to the education, health and
25 responsible behavior of New Mexicans be affirmed by the

1 legislature; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor be requested to
3 declare a week in April "Environmental Education Week" and to
4 encourage all kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers to
5 teach their students outdoors for at least one hour that week
6 and encourage state agencies to celebrate environmental
7 education through existing programs; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and
9 fish and the New Mexico department of agriculture as lead
10 agencies and in cooperation with the department of
11 environment; the cultural affairs department; the cooperative
12 extension service of New Mexico state university; the state
13 parks division and the forestry division of the energy,
14 minerals and natural resources department; the state land
15 office; the department of health; the public education
16 department; and the children, youth and families department
17 be requested to study the feasibility of creating an
18 environmental education grant program to increase
19 opportunities for environmental education for New Mexico
20 students and be requested to report back to the appropriate
21 interim committees by November 1, 2016; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
23 transmitted to the governor; the department of environment;
24 the cultural affairs department; the New Mexico department of
25 agriculture; the cooperative extension service of New Mexico

1 state university; the state parks division and the forestry
2 division of the energy, minerals and natural resources
3 department; the department of game and fish; the state land
4 office; the department of health; the public education
5 department; and the children, youth and families department.

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