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HOUSE MEMORIAL 15

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

INTRODUCED BY

Rebecca Dow

A MEMORIAL

DECLARING JANUARY 24, 2019 "NEW MEXICO FOOD AND FARMS AND SCHOOL NUTRITION DAY" IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

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 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, it would increase annual farm income by three hundred ninety-two million dollars (\$392,000,000); and

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

4 WHEREAS, school nutrition programs provided through the
5 national school lunch program, school breakfast program and
6 summer food service have provided millions of healthy and
7 nutritious meals to school children throughout New Mexico for
8 more than seventy years; and

9 WHEREAS, the school nutrition and summer meal programs
10 serve healthy meals, free and at low cost, to students in New
11 Mexico schools; and

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

15 WHEREAS, many children consume at least one-half of their
16 daily calories at school, and for many children, food served at
17 school is the only meal they eat daily; and

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

23 WHEREAS, over the last six years, more than fifty-seven
24 school food authorities have purchased New Mexico-grown produce
25 for school meals with state funds, enhancing the diets of three

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1 hundred thirty-three thousand three hundred students, promoting
2 healthier lifestyles and increasing academic achievement, while
3 close to two million dollars (\$2,000,000) has benefited New
4 Mexico's farming economy; and

5 WHEREAS, seventy farmers' markets are providing New Mexico
6 products to forty-five thousand people each week in thirty-one
7 counties by direct sales and through the supplemental nutrition
8 assistance program, the special supplemental nutrition program
9 for women, infants and children and senior farmers' market
10 nutrition programs, creating fresh food access for low-income
11 individuals and resulting in annual gross sales to farmers of
12 over seven million five hundred thousand dollars (\$7,500,000)
13 in 2018; and

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

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

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1 (\$1,200,000,000) in diabetes-related health care expenses; and

2 WHEREAS, creating food hubs, produce processing and
3 distribution centers and community kitchens could accelerate
4 the economic growth of farmers and rural food entrepreneurs;
5 and

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

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

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
18 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize
19 that the time has come to invest in New Mexico's children,
20 economy and future; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that January 24, 2019 be declared
22 "New Mexico Food and Farms and School Nutrition Day" in the
23 house of representatives; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the executive director of the New Mexico

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1 farmers' marketing association.

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