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SENATE MEMORIAL 32

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022

INTRODUCED BY
Leo Jaramillo

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING JACOB TORRES FOR HIS MISSION TO TAKE NEW MEXICO
CHILE INTO SPACE AND TO THE MOON AND MARS.

WHEREAS, Jacob Torres, an Espanola native, is launching
New Mexico chile into outer space; and

WHEREAS, Jacob works for the space crop production team at
the national aeronautics and space administration at the
Kennedy space center in Florida; and

WHEREAS, a proud alumnus of McCurdy charter school and a
graduate of northern New Mexico college, New Mexico state
university and Purdue university, Jacob started working at the
national aeronautics and space administration as an intern in
2018; and

WHEREAS, eventually, Jacob earned a full-time position as
an engineer and plant scientist under a laboratory support

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1 services and operations contract; and

2 WHEREAS, the space crop production team's mission is to
3 supplement astronauts' diets with fresh crops in space; and

4 WHEREAS, there are two plant growth systems on the
5 international space station: the vegetable production system
6 and advanced plant habitat 04; and

7 WHEREAS, the advanced plant habitat 04 experiment was
8 chosen to demonstrate the capabilities of the advanced plant
9 habitat, and after testing, New Mexico chile was found to be a
10 good crop for the first fruiting experiment; and

11 WHEREAS, working to include New Mexico and its culture,
12 the team partnered with the New Mexico state university chile
13 pepper institute and discovered that the NUMEX Espanola
14 improved chile pepper grew the best in a plant habitat
15 environment; and

16 WHEREAS, the national aeronautics and space administration
17 followed the traditions of New Mexico chile as closely as
18 possible with the advice of Jacob, their local chile expert,
19 and spelled chile with an "e" in all publications; and

20 WHEREAS, the team harvested green and then red chile
21 during the experiment, and the "Hatchstronauts" asked the state
22 question – red or green? – in space; and

23 WHEREAS, in an effort to include the community in the
24 "space chile" adventure, Jacob, Fidel Martinez and David Hanson
25 started and funded an activity called the "space chile grow a

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1 pepper plant challenge" that served as a rapid response
2 educational activity during the onset of the coronavirus
3 disease 2019 pandemic and provided a way for educators,
4 students and regular individuals to stay engaged during the
5 shutdown; and

6 WHEREAS, the space chile grow a pepper plant challenge is
7 now a national aeronautics and space administration-funded
8 activity under Jacob's leadership for student "space farmers"
9 around the world, including in New Mexico, who grow Martinez
10 Chimayo chile in the students' homes or classrooms for science;
11 and

12 WHEREAS, Jacob does student outreach in the evenings and
13 during free time, including virtually broadcasting rocket
14 launches in zoom chats with classrooms of kids across New
15 Mexico, providing virtual tours of the laboratory at the
16 Kennedy space center and answering questions; and

17 WHEREAS, following the teaching of his grandfather, Juan
18 Valencia, Jacob dedicates ten percent of his time to helping
19 the next generation succeed; and

20 WHEREAS, the space chile grow a pepper plant challenge
21 worked with student artists from the Espanola valley to create
22 the mission badge for advanced plant habitat 04, with the art
23 printed by astronaut Megan McArthur on the international space
24 station, representing space chile around the world; and

25 WHEREAS, Jacob's teammates on the national aeronautics and

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1 space administration science team, including Matthew Romeyn,
2 Lashelle Spencer, Nicole Dufour, Dr. Ray Wheeler, Oscar Monje,
3 Jeff Richards and Lucie Poulete, have fully embraced and
4 supported Jacob and fostered the growing of New Mexico chile in
5 space;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
7 OF NEW MEXICO that Jacob Torres be recognized for his mission
8 to take New Mexico chile into space and to the moon and mars;
9 and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to Jacob Torres, Fidel Martinez, David Hanson,
12 Matthew Romeyn, Lashelle Spencer, Nicole Dufour, Dr. Ray
13 Wheeler, Oscar Monje, Jeff Richards and Lucie Poulete.

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