

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF FORESTS TO THE STATE.

3
4 WHEREAS, New Mexico is well known for its beautiful and
5 abundant resources, which provide ecological, cultural and
6 economic benefits and make New Mexico the land of
7 enchantment; and

8 WHEREAS, New Mexico's forests cover almost one-third of
9 the state, or twenty-four million seven hundred thousand
10 acres, with forty-two percent being privately owned,
11 including tribal lands; and

12 WHEREAS, forests provide essential ecological services,
13 such as providing a habitat for wildlife, oxygen, clean
14 water, the uptake of carbon dioxide and cooling temperatures.
15 As one student said, "Forests are not just trees, they are
16 life.". As another student said, "If forests disappear, many
17 species won't have a home."; and

18 WHEREAS, forests provide cultural connections that are
19 essential to the rich heritage of New Mexico, and families
20 throughout New Mexico have loved the land, including forests,
21 for generations. As one student said, "My grandpa and I go
22 to the forest to hunt piñon nuts."; and

23 WHEREAS, the loss of forests takes away the culture, way
24 of life and income for many New Mexicans – from grazing,
25 collecting firewood, harvesting medicinal herbs and wood for

1 latillas, hunting and other activities; and

2 WHEREAS, outdoor recreation, including recreation in the
3 forests, brings in billions of dollars to New Mexico's
4 economy and makes up more than two and one-tenth percent of
5 the state's gross domestic product; and

6 WHEREAS, mental wellness, which can be found through
7 connection with the forest, is priceless. As one student
8 said, "The forest is a peaceful place where I go to clear my
9 mind.". As another student said, "Forests provide
10 sanctuary."; and

11 WHEREAS, forests are under threat from drought,
12 catastrophic wildfires, rising temperatures, trash,
13 overcrowding of trees and bark beetles. As one student said,
14 "Everything in the forest is connected. If one thing dies,
15 others die, too."; and

16 WHEREAS, people can help prevent catastrophic wildfires
17 by putting out campfires, not throwing cigarette butts out of
18 car windows and educating others about how to keep the forest
19 safe; and

20 WHEREAS, New Mexico's *2020 Forest Action Plan* calls for
21 the support and expansion of public outreach and education to
22 "foster a society that supports watershed restoration
23 activities and values resilient and healthy forest
24 ecosystems"; and

25 WHEREAS, many New Mexicans are unaware of the importance

1 of forests and the threats to them; and

2 WHEREAS, the urgency for forest education is growing,
3 and education and outreach can help develop the next
4 generation of environmental stewards;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
6 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the importance of forests to the
7 state be recognized for the forests' ecological, cultural and
8 economic purposes; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor be requested to
10 declare a forest appreciation day; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state agencies involved
12 in protecting forests be commended for those agencies'
13 efforts and be encouraged to continue to work with private
14 landowners, tribal entities and other voices to protect the
15 forests; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state agencies involved
17 in protecting forests be encouraged to continue to invest in
18 education and outreach, using social media, student work and
19 other out-of-the-box ideas to raise awareness about forests
20 and to continue to provide funding for student experiences,
21 such as field trips to forests and other outdoor learning
22 opportunities; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all New Mexicans be
24 encouraged to help protect the state's forests by being good
25 stewards of the land and leaving no trace while out in the

1 forests by removing trash and fully extinguishing campfires;
2 and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 transmitted to the governor, the New Mexico outdoor recreation
5 division of the economic development department, the state
6 forestry division and the state parks division of the energy,
7 minerals and natural resources department, the state land
8 office, the department of game and fish and the office of
9 natural resources trustee. _____

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