

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF A NEW MEXICO BIRTH DEFECTS
3 SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM AND DECLARING MARCH 10, 2011 "MARCH OF
4 DIMES DAY" IN THE SENATE.

5
6 WHEREAS, birth defects are the leading cause of infant
7 death and a major cause of pediatric hospitalizations in the
8 nation; and

9 WHEREAS, birth defects are common, costly and
10 challenging for parents and society, and some birth defects
11 are preventable; and

12 WHEREAS, birth defects are a leading cause of infant
13 mortality in New Mexico, accounting for twenty-six percent of
14 infant deaths in the state; and

15 WHEREAS, each year in New Mexico, approximately six
16 hundred infants, or about one infant out of every forty-five
17 births, are born with a major birth defect and another thirty
18 to forty infants are born with congenital hearing loss; and

19 WHEREAS, the incidence of cleft lip and palate in New
20 Mexico is rapidly increasing; and

21 WHEREAS, children with conditions such as these often
22 require additional health care and other services to support
23 their growth and development; and

24 WHEREAS, babies born with birth defects have a greater
25 chance of illness and long-term disability than babies

1 without birth defects; and

2 WHEREAS, identifying these children early in their lives
3 enhances the opportunity for them to receive the medical care
4 and early intervention services they need; and

5 WHEREAS, since 2000, birth defects have been a
6 reportable condition in New Mexico; and

7 WHEREAS, the New Mexico birth defects registry was
8 initially established in 1995 in the family health bureau of
9 the department of health and was supported by federal and
10 state funding until 2005; and

11 WHEREAS, there is currently no state or other funding to
12 support the activity required to maintain the birth defects
13 registry; and

14 WHEREAS, although data are being reported, no staff is
15 currently assigned responsibility for retrieving the data and
16 reporting it to the federal centers for disease control and
17 prevention; and

18 WHEREAS, an adequately funded birth defects surveillance
19 system would allow the state not only to collect and report
20 data regarding birth defects that are reported to the
21 registry, but to interpret the data for the purpose of
22 program and policy development; and

23 WHEREAS, an effective birth defects surveillance system
24 would enable the state to:

25 A. monitor the prevalence of birth defects by

1 identifying clusters that should be investigated;

2 B. target prevention activities;

3 C. assess the impact of screening and prevention
4 activities; and

5 D. link children to necessary services such as
6 case management for those with complex medical needs and
7 health care and early intervention services to maximize the
8 child's development potential; and

9 WHEREAS, the cost to fund a birth defects surveillance
10 system is estimated to be one hundred fifty thousand dollars
11 (\$150,000) per year; and

12 WHEREAS, funding for a birth defects surveillance system
13 would make it possible to increase the number of healthy
14 babies born in New Mexico, leverage federal funds for birth
15 defects research, implement intensive birth defects
16 prevention campaigns and provide education and outreach to
17 New Mexico families affected by birth defects; and

18 WHEREAS, the effort to raise awareness of the importance
19 of a birth defects surveillance system begins with this
20 senate memorial;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
22 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize the need for a New
23 Mexico birth defects surveillance system and that
24 March 10, 2011 be declared "March of Dimes Day" in the
25 senate; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to Brandi Van Pelt, the state director of program services and state director of public affairs for the March of Dimes.
