

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE AND VALUE OF NEW MEXICO SCHOOL BUS DRIVERS AND DECLARING MARCH 11, 2011 "SCHOOL STUDENT TRANSPORTATION DAY" IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WHEREAS, transportation to and from school is not merely a convenience, it is a critical component of every successful educational enterprise; and

WHEREAS, ensuring access to the school bus is the first step to ensuring a successful experience for a child in the classroom; and

WHEREAS, in the United States, school buses provide an estimated ten billion student trips each year, and, every day, more than four hundred eighty thousand school buses transport twenty-six million children to and from schools and school-related activities; and

WHEREAS, school buses are among the safest vehicles on the road, due, in large part, to the dedication and training of school bus drivers; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1920s, the first training manuals for school bus drivers were created, and in the 1970s, the national highway traffic safety administration issued standards for school bus driver training; and

WHEREAS, in the early 1990s, the federal highway administration issued a requirement that all school bus

drivers possess a commercial driver's license; and

WHEREAS, in order to obtain a commercial driver's license, school bus drivers must pass a knowledge and skills test and a biennial physical exam and are subject to random drug and alcohol testing; and

WHEREAS, state and federal laws require that criminal background checks be conducted on all potential school bus drivers; and

WHEREAS, driving a bus and satisfying statutory requirements are only the start of the responsibilities faced by school bus drivers; and

WHEREAS, school bus drivers must personally conduct a physical check of various vehicle systems to ensure the safety of the vehicle and its readiness prior to transporting children; and

WHEREAS, daily, school bus drivers are faced with the discipline of children and medical or other emergencies, and they must be prepared to attend to the unique requirements of students with special needs; and

WHEREAS, because children generally ride the same bus every day, the school bus driver often becomes a trusted friend, and, for parents, the school bus driver is the person to whom they entrust the safety of their children; and

WHEREAS, school bus drivers must be ever attentive to the challenges of the road, including inattentive and

distracted motorists, disruptive students, inappropriate and even illegal activities on the bus and myriad other situations; and

WHEREAS, school bus drivers are deserving of the highest commendation for the outstanding job they perform every school day in providing safe transportation to New Mexico's children;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the importance and value of New Mexico school bus drivers be recognized and that March 11, 2011 be declared "School Student Transportation Day" in the house of representatives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the school transportation bureau of the public education department and the New Mexico school transportation association.