

A JOINT MEMORIAL

**RECOMMENDING THAT NEW MEXICO CONSIDER NAMING THE SANDIA
HAIRSTREAK THE OFFICIAL NEW MEXICO BUTTERFLY.**

WHEREAS, New Mexico's state symbols include the official animal, cookie, flower, insect, grass, fish, fossil, bird, question, gem and vegetable, but do not currently include an official butterfly; and

WHEREAS, adding an official butterfly symbol would add color, beauty and diversity to the state's array of existing symbols; and

WHEREAS, at least seventeen other states have official butterfly symbols, and these states include New Mexico's neighbors Arizona, Oklahoma and Texas, as well as Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oregon, Vermont and Virginia; and

WHEREAS, butterflies enhance the beauty of the environment, and naming a butterfly symbol would benefit tourism and the economy of New Mexico by bringing attention to a New Mexico butterfly, by adding credibility to New Mexico among entomologists, which may encourage scientific research in the state, and by providing educational opportunities for study and appreciation of the butterfly and its habitat; and

WHEREAS, naming a New Mexico butterfly would enhance awareness of the importance of butterflies, in ecosystems as important pollinators for wildflowers and agricultural crops and promote the conservation of our natural wildlife heritage; and

WHEREAS, children love butterflies, and naming a New Mexico butterfly would bring joy to New Mexico's children; and

WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak butterfly is thought of as uniquely New Mexican; and

WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak symbolizes the ability of New Mexican residents to thrive year-round in a semi arid climate where different years bring floods and droughts and where the terrain is beautiful but rugged; and

WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak is one of about twenty-five different species of hairstreaks in the gossamer-wing family residing in New Mexico, and it is small and gold and green in color and it lives in and among beargrass plants, where its pink, lavender and white caterpillars eat beargrass flowers, making the butterfly and its caterpillar easy to identify; and

WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak was discovered in Albuquerque in 1959 in La Cueva canyon and can be easily found by children among the native beargrass in New Mexico's wide-open spaces as well as in towns and cities where the

beargrass plant grows; and

WHEREAS, the Sandia hairstreak, a New Mexico native, does not migrate, but stays in the New Mexico landscape year-round and has not been designated as the state butterfly for any other state;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the appropriate legislative interim committee be requested to consider recommendations for the adoption of the Sandia hairstreak, a native New Mexican butterfly, as the official state butterfly, which contributes to the beauty, diversity and enchantment of the New Mexico landscape; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the appropriate state agencies be encouraged to promote the Sandia hairstreak, a native New Mexican butterfly, as the official state butterfly, which contributes to the beauty, diversity and enchantment of the New Mexico landscape; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the secretary of state, the tourism department, the state parks division of the energy, minerals and natural resources department, the state land office and other appropriate state agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the wild friends dancers be commended for raising public awareness of the butterfly with their original dance presentation entitled "The New Mexico

Gossamer Wing" at the 2002 legislative session.