

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE NEED FOR INCREASED PENALTIES FOR AND EDUCATION ABOUT TROPHY POACHING; REQUESTING THAT THE GOVERNOR DECLARE A TROPHY POACHING AWARENESS DAY.

WHEREAS, wildlife belongs to the citizens of New Mexico and is too precious to be wasted; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has a long tradition of hunting, which provides food for some families, income to local communities and opportunities for tourists to enjoy the animals that roam in this unique state; and

WHEREAS, trophy poaching is the act of illegally killing an animal for the most valuable part of its body, such as its head or antlers, and leaving the rest to waste; and

WHEREAS, trophy poaching is increasing in New Mexico, is unfair to legal hunters, damaging to big game populations and leaves fewer animals for future generations to enjoy; and

WHEREAS, although only a small percentage of the population engages in trophy poaching, these individuals cause significant damage to big game animal populations by depriving them of successful genes for future generations; and

WHEREAS, big game animals have inherent value in themselves, value to people who enjoy seeing the animals in their natural habitat and economic value as a draw of tourists and legal hunters to the state; and

WHEREAS, trophy animals poached in New Mexico include elk, bighorn sheep, oryx, ibex, Barbary sheep, deer, pronghorn antelope, javelina, bear and cougar; and

WHEREAS, existing penalties do not effectively deter trophy poaching; and

WHEREAS, more public education is needed about the damage that trophy poaching causes and the need for greater enforcement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the importance of wildlife in the state be recognized and that the harm caused by trophy poaching be acknowledged; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and fish be requested to take all possible steps to deter trophy poaching; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and fish be commended for proposing stiffer penalties for trophy poaching, such as making trophy poaching a fourth degree felony; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of game and fish be requested to take steps to increase public awareness that trophy poaching is illegal and to inform the public about how to report these crimes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor be requested to issue a proclamation declaring a trophy poaching awareness day

to further increase public awareness of the problems associated with trophy poaching; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the director of the department of game and fish and the chair of the state game commission.