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March 16, 2021

**Permanent funding for essential early childhood education
clears last hurdle on way to senate floor**

SANTA FE, NM – Today, the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) and the Lujan Grisham administration applaud the New Mexico State Senate Finance Committee for its decision to send House Joint Resolution 1 (HJR 1) to the Senate floor with a “do pass” recommendation. HJR 1, sponsored by Reps. Moe Maestas, Javier Martinez, Georgene Louis, and Liz Thomson, aims to increase the resources available for early childhood care and education programs—as well as K-12 programs—throughout New Mexico by sending a constitutional amendment to New Mexico voters that would earmark an additional 1.25% of the Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPF) each year for such a purpose.

“We thank the members of the Senate Finance Committee for their decision to grow investments in New Mexico's children and families,” said ECECD Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky. “Securing long-term, sustainable funding for early childhood care and education programs is critical to ensuring that young children and families in every part of our state get the support they need to thrive and succeed.”

Should New Mexicans ultimately vote to pass the constitutional amendment, the state will expand and enhance access to high-quality early childhood education services for children from birth to Kindergarten entry, as well as K-12 programs. Public support for using a small portion of the Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPF) for early childhood programs is both strong and bipartisan. A recent poll conducted by LD Insights indicates that 75 percent of New Mexico voters support using one percent of the LGPF annually to provide more funds for early childhood programs (63 percent of Republicans and 79 percent of Democrats).

Funds from the LGPF would be used to help future generations of New Mexicans lay down a foundation for lifelong success by helping provide universal access to pre-kindergarten, expanding home visiting programs, and advancing a diverse, well-compensated and credentialed early childhood workforce. K-12 programs would also receive a portion of 1.25% from the LGPF, helping further promote cradle to college investments in New Mexico’s families and children.

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