

State of New Mexico

New Mexico Senate

For Immediate Release: Contact: Gerald Gonzalez 505-490-1357
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LEGISLATION SPONSORED BY SENATOR ERIC GRIEGO TO ILLUMINATE "LINK" BETWEEN ANIMAL CRUELTY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PASSED BY LEGISLATURE

Santa Fe, NM – “By illuminating the link between cruelty to animals and domestic violence, we have an opportunity to begin to more effectively impact the problem of domestic violence,” said Senator Eric G. Griego (D-Bernalillo & Valencia-14), in commenting on the passage by the House today of his bill, Senate Joint Memorial 27 (SJM 27). SJM 27 declares February 10, 2010 as New Mexico Link Awareness Day in the legislature.

Senator Griego pointed out that studies have underscored 'the link.' Some studies have reported that:

- men prosecuted for animal abuse were five times more likely to commit violent crimes, four times more likely to commit property crimes and three times more likely to have a law enforcement record for drug or disorderly conduct offenses;

- between fifty-four percent and seventy-one percent of women seeking shelter from domestic violence reported that their partners had threatened, injured or killed one or more family pets;

- thirty-four percent of children who were physically and sexually abused and twenty-four and one half percent of children who were physically abused acknowledged engaging in animal abuse -- as opposed to four and seven-tenths of children not experiencing this abuse; and

- thirty-six to twenty-six percent of children who witness violence in abusive families demonstrate cruelty to animals.

In 2004, the Department of Public Safety hosted the Governor's first conference on 'the link.' Conferences have been held annually ever since. At the 2009 conference a steering committee was formed to continue the work of raising awareness concerning 'the link' across the state. "Passing SJM 27 is intended to support those efforts and to emphasize the importance of training professionals who work with issues related to domestic violence so that they can be alert to recognizing circumstances that call for greater awareness and intervention to protect victims of domestic violence," added "Senator Griego.

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