CURRY COUNTY
RESOLUTION NO. 2019-98

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE HONORABLE GOVERNOR LUJAN GRISHAM AND THE NEW MEXICO STATE LEGISLATURE TO REPEAL THE STATE TAX ON SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS FOR NEW MEXICO SENIORS

WHEREAS, in 1990, the New Mexico State Legislature passed Senate Bill 310, which repealed New Mexico's tax exemption for Social Security benefits; and

WHEREAS, in New Mexico, taxpayers aged 65 and older with incomes up to $18,000, or $30,000 for married couples, are eligible to exempt just $8,000 from their total income, which includes Social Security benefits; and

WHEREAS, tax exemption is phased out as senior's income increases, and by the time an individual's income reached $28,501, or $51,001 for a married couple, they receive no exemption for any of their income, including Social Security benefits; and

WHEREAS, a Social Security tax is a form of double taxation because when New Mexicans receive their paychecks the money that is taken out for Social Security is subject to federal and state income taxes, then they are taxed again on the benefits they receive; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is one (1) of just thirteen (13) States in America that levies an income tax on Social Security payments to at least some beneficiaries, and New Mexico has the second highest tax on Social Security benefits in the nation; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that there are 120,000 New Mexicans age 65 and older, which makes up 17.5% of the state's population; and

WHEREAS, at 12.2%, New Mexico is ranked third in the nation in the percentage of seniors living in poverty; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico's State tax on Social Security benefits costs the average Social Security recipient nearly $700 a year; and

WHEREAS, the average Social Security benefit in New Mexico is only $13,900 a year, and the cost of food, housing, and healthcare averages $28,000 a year for older Americans, which leaves seniors facing the impossible choice between buying food and medicine or keeping the lights, heat, and water on; and

WHEREAS, taxing Social Security benefits undermines the purpose of the Social Security Act, which was designed to lift seniors out of poverty, not fund the state government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Governing Body of Curry County that:

1) The Honorable Governor Lujan Grisham add the repeal of the State tax on Social Security benefits in New Mexico to the upcoming 2020 New Mexico Legislative Session agenda;

2) If placed on the 2020 New Mexico Legislative Session agenda, the New Mexico State Legislature support the repeal of the New Mexico State tax on Social Security benefits.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be delivered and presented to the Honorable Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and to the New Mexico State Legislators representing Curry County and the New Mexico Counties.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that County Manager Lance Pyle is hereby authorized to do all necessary in informing and working with Governor Lujan Grisham and New Mexico Legislature to accomplish this Resolution for the residents of Curry County and the State of New Mexico.

DONE AND APPROVED this 19th day of December, 2019.

THE BOARD OF CURRY COUNTY COMMISSION

Chet Spear, Chairman

Robert Thornton, Vice-Chair

Robert Sandoval, Commissioner

Absent
Ben McDaniel, Commissioner

Seth Martin, Commissioner

ATTEST:

(SEAL)

Annie Hogland, County Clerk

APPROVED FOR LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

Stephen Doerr, County Attorney