

1 A MEMORIAL

2 DECLARING FEBRUARY 23, 2017 "CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AND  
3 DETENTION OFFICER DAY" IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

4  
5 WHEREAS, correctional officers and detention officers  
6 throughout New Mexico have one of the most difficult and  
7 stressful jobs; and

8 WHEREAS, correctional officers and detention officers  
9 are tasked with the operation of correctional and detention  
10 facilities and are responsible for the care and custody of  
11 inmates, as well as protecting the public from incarcerated  
12 individuals; and

13 WHEREAS, many of the correctional and detention  
14 facilities have unsafe conditions, with some facilities  
15 falling below the level of adequate funding; and

16 WHEREAS, lack of adequate funding has led to a reduction  
17 in critical training, a lack of vitally needed equipment for  
18 officers and unsafe staffing levels, resulting in an increase  
19 in assaults by inmates on officers; and

20 WHEREAS, because of high vacancy rates, with some  
21 facilities above twenty percent officer vacancy, correctional  
22 and detention officers are often forced to work mandatory  
23 sixty- to seventy-hour work weeks, which in turn has led to  
24 retention and recruitment issues and an even more hazardous  
25 work environment for the officers and support staff; and

1           WHEREAS, forced mandatory overtime in such a stressful  
2 environment has a direct correlation to mental and physical  
3 fatigue, lack of focus, decreased efficiency and unsteady  
4 judgment of correctional and detention officers; and

5           WHEREAS, these conditions cause officers to be less  
6 effective on the job when dealing with incidents with  
7 inmates; and

8           WHEREAS, the lack of funding has a negative impact on  
9 the day-to-day mission of the officers; and

10          WHEREAS, there is also serious concern for facilities  
11 that face millions of dollars in deferred maintenance; and

12          WHEREAS, the conditions in many of the correctional and  
13 detention facilities across the state are reminiscent of the  
14 conditions that led to the 1980 prison riot at the  
15 penitentiary of New Mexico and incidents in other New Mexico  
16 facilities; and

17          WHEREAS, current conditions demand immediate recognition  
18 of the crisis and proposed solutions;

19          NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
20 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 23,  
21 2017 be declared "Correctional Officer and Detention Officer  
22 Day" in the house of representatives; and

23          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the difficult situations  
24 correctional officers and detention officers face every day  
25 be recognized; and

1           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor, the  
2 corrections department and local governments be requested to  
3 work with the legislature to address the problem of  
4 underfunding and unsafe staffing levels at correctional and  
5 detention facilities; and

6           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
7 transmitted to the governor and the secretary of corrections.

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