

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A MULTIAGENCY STUDY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN; SUPPORTING THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF THE INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT, CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON BEHALF OF NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN, CHILDREN AND ELDERS WHO HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, BATTERING AND STALKING.

WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico has a Native American population whose families, including infants, children, youth, adults and elders, suffer at increased rates from intimate partner violence, family violence and stalking; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the state to urge a collaborative response to address the problems of women, children and elders who have been subjected to such violence; and

WHEREAS, Native American traditions honor, respect and revere women as the essential life-giving force, as guardians of cultural attributes and endowed with the knowledge to sustain and deliver traditional values for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, Native American women experience high rates of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking within New Mexico and across the United States; and

WHEREAS, culturally compatible shelters, resources and

rehabilitative institutions are insufficient to meet the needs of tribal communities and not conducive to the health and well-being of all family members and intimate partners; and

WHEREAS, the prevalence of violent crimes against Native American women by non-native perpetrators poses additional legal complications, as non-native perpetrators sometimes are left unprosecuted and unpunished because of jurisdictional loopholes; and

WHEREAS, the future of the state of New Mexico rests in its protection of all constituents through its legal structures, state departments and systems of governance to ensure the safety, quality of life and well-being of women; and

WHEREAS, making it possible for Native American women, their children and elders to live in an environment free of violence, sexual assault and stalking is not only important but also critical; and

WHEREAS, the Indian affairs department, children, youth and families department and department of health have the capacity and resources to examine and assess the scope of issues associated with disproportionate rates of violence against Native American women;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the state increase awareness of violence, stalking and sexual assault

against Native American women; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the house of representatives request the Indian affairs department to convene an interagency working group on Native American domestic violence that includes its staff and staff from the children, youth and families department and department of health to study the specific domestic violence problems of Native American women and to pinpoint culturally important distinctions in successful treatment of Native American women, children and elders who have suffered domestic violence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency working group on Native American domestic violence report its findings and conclusions to the interim Indian affairs committee during the 2007 interim; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency working group on Native American domestic violence engage in collaborative efforts to end violence against Native American women; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of Indian affairs, the secretary of children, youth and families and the secretary of health.