

HOUSE MEMORIAL 59

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO MONITOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO OF
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO AMERICAN
INDIAN TASK FORCE.

WHEREAS, according to the performance effectiveness report
released by the council of university presidents in November
2008, the retention rate in fall 2008 for returning Native
American freshman students at the university of New Mexico main
campus was sixty-eight and nine-tenths percent, the lowest of
all other ethnic groups; and

WHEREAS, according to the official enrollment report by
the university of New Mexico's office of the registrar, the
statistics regarding Native American students correlates to
those findings in the performance effectiveness report; and

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1 WHEREAS, the statistics could be attributed to the lack of
2 awareness Native American students have about student services
3 specifically targeted to assist them; and

4 WHEREAS, in February 2006 the university of New Mexico
5 American Indian task force developed a working paper outlining
6 specific priorities and recommendations regarding American
7 Indian retention at the university of New Mexico; and

8 WHEREAS, that task force provided a list of
9 recommendations to the university of New Mexico, many of which
10 have yet to be implemented, including:

11 A. maintaining a directory of Native American
12 programs that would be a guide to Native American programs,
13 projects and initiatives offered at the university to better
14 serve Native American students;

15 B. agreeing to a long-term commitment on the part
16 of the university to improve its service to Native American
17 students, faculty, staff and New Mexico Indian communities;

18 C. establishing a centralized location to track and
19 disburse funds coming to Native American students in the form
20 of tribal scholarships and financial assistance programs and to
21 house a financial aid advisor knowledgeable about scholarship
22 programs available to tribal members and processes to gain
23 access to that aid; and

24 D. designating an advisor for freshmen and transfer
25 students and creating a mandatory Native American orientation

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1 program for incoming freshmen and transfer students to better
2 acquaint them with the university of New Mexico main campus and
3 Native American programs, scholarships and organizations; and

4 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico's board of regents
5 has broad authority for "control and management" of the
6 university, as stipulated under Article 12, Section 13 of the
7 constitution of New Mexico, and pursuant to that authority
8 should develop a state-tribal-institutional partnership to
9 address the range of issues that impact Native American
10 students attending the university of New Mexico; and

11 WHEREAS, the higher education department strategic
12 priorities and goals specifically outline under:

13 "Strategic Priority

14 1: Increase student access and success,

15 Goal 1.3: to "Raise the minority
16 representation in higher education to be reflective of the
17 state's population"; and

18 Goal 1.4: to "Improve the minority
19 participation and graduation rates in graduate and professional
20 programs";

21 NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
22 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the Indian
23 affairs department be requested to convene meetings of
24 representatives of the university of New Mexico board of
25 regents, the office of the provost, the division of equity and

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1 inclusion, the secretary of higher education, the Indian
2 Affairs department and the tribal higher education consortium
3 to further study the strengths and weaknesses of services and
4 programs provided to Native American students at the university
5 of New Mexico and to report those findings to the interim
6 Indian affairs committee, the higher education department and
7 the university of New Mexico board of regents; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university of New Mexico
9 report its progress on implementation of the recommendations of
10 the university of New Mexico American Indian task force; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the secretary of Indian affairs, the secretary
13 of higher education, the chair of the tribal higher education
14 consortium, the chair and each member of the university of New
15 Mexico board of regents, the provost of the university of New
16 Mexico and the director of the division of equity and inclusion
17 at the university of New Mexico.