

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 25

2 **49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Clinton D. Harden

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO STUDY AUTISM
12 SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND TO DETERMINE HOW TO PROVIDE BEST
13 PRACTICE SERVICES TO ALL CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN PUBLIC
14 SCHOOLS.

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16 WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders are neurobiological
17 disorders that interfere with the normal development of
18 communication, behavior, learning and social interaction
19 skills; and

20 WHEREAS, the United States centers for disease control and
21 prevention reports that autism spectrum disorders are the
22 second most common type of developmental disability and are
23 seen in all ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups throughout
24 the world; and

25 WHEREAS, the autism society of America reports that autism

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1 spectrum disorders are the fastest growing developmental
2 disability, with an annual cost of ninety billion dollars
3 (\$90,000,000,000); and

4 WHEREAS, experts attest that the cost of lifelong care for
5 an individual with an autism spectrum disorder may be reduced
6 by two-thirds with early diagnosis, intervention and education;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, early autism spectrum disorder diagnosis and
9 intervention is instrumental in determining success; and

10 WHEREAS, the national research council report on *Educating*
11 *Children with Autism* recommends, as a best practice, teaching
12 individuals with autism a minimum of twenty-five hours per week
13 through active engagement begun as early as possible; and

14 WHEREAS, children with autism need specialized teaching
15 methods; and

16 WHEREAS, the usual teaching methods that work with other
17 students, including students with other disabilities, are not
18 necessarily successful with students with autism; and

19 WHEREAS, specialized training is needed for school
20 personnel working with children with autism; and

21 WHEREAS, children with autism are all different and
22 require an individualized approach with a menu of programs
23 available;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
25 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public education department

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1 conduct a study to determine how to provide best practice
2 services to all children with autism in the public schools
3 through the use of highly qualified New Mexico autism
4 specialists in the development and implementation of the
5 individualized education plans of all students with an autism
6 spectrum disorder statewide; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
8 department develop a written plan for showing steps on how the
9 public education department will work actively, collaboratively
10 and cooperatively with other state agencies, groups and
11 stakeholders, including, but not limited to, the department of
12 health, the human services department, the children, youth and
13 families department, the autism task force, the New Mexico
14 developmental disabilities planning council, the behavioral
15 health planning council of New Mexico, the New Mexico autism
16 society and the autism programs at the university of New Mexico
17 center for development and disability in order to develop and
18 implement appropriate systems of care for all students with
19 autism spectrum disorder; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the public education
21 department report its findings, including the written plan, to
22 the legislative education study committee by September 30,
23 2010; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the secretaries of health, human services and

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1 children, youth and families and to representatives from the
2 autism task force, the New Mexico developmental disabilities
3 planning council, the behavioral health planning council of New
4 Mexico, the New Mexico autism society, the autism programs at
5 the university of New Mexico center for development and
6 disability, and the department of special education and
7 communication disorders at New Mexico state university.

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