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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 6

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

James Roger Madalena

FOR THE INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING CONGRESS TO CHANGE THE FUNDING MECHANISM FOR THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE FROM A DOMESTIC DISCRETIONARY PROGRAM TO AN ENTITLEMENT PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the federal government, through treaties entered into with tribal entities, has the primary responsibility for providing health care to the Native American population in New Mexico and the United States; and

WHEREAS, a shortfall of millions of dollars in the federal Indian health service budget in recent years has resulted in a severe cutback in health care services to the more than one hundred eighty thousand Native Americans living in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans in New Mexico and across the nation experience the highest rates of cancer, obesity, diabetes

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1 and heart disease and are adversely affected by limited access
2 to health care due to chronic underfunding of the Indian health
3 service; and

4 WHEREAS, even with the recent increase in appropriation,
5 the Indian health service is still funded at approximately
6 sixty percent of need; and

7 WHEREAS, in 2009, the Indian health service spent an
8 estimated two thousand six hundred twenty dollars (\$2,620) for
9 medical services per patient, which is less than the amount
10 that was spent for medical services per federal prisoner, more
11 than a decade ago, of three thousand two hundred dollars
12 (\$3,200); and

13 WHEREAS, in 2009, entitlement programs spent two to five
14 times as much per individual as the Indian health service
15 spent, with five thousand one hundred dollars (\$5,100) spent
16 per medicaid enrollee and eleven thousand dollars (\$11,000)
17 spent per medicare beneficiary; and

18 WHEREAS, underfunding of the Indian health service results
19 in delays in obtaining health care due to a lack of facilities
20 and a shortage of health care professionals within the Indian
21 health service and discourages Native Americans from seeking
22 treatment in a timely manner, which has a significant adverse
23 effect on their state of health; and

24 WHEREAS, the country's trust obligation to fund services
25 for Native Americans deprived of their lands and traditional

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1 ways and to provide access to adequate health care for Native
2 Americans is founded in treaty, statute, constitution and
3 ethics; and

4 WHEREAS, New Mexico and other states cannot bear sole
5 fiscal responsibility for providing adequate health care to
6 their Native American populations;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
8 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that congress be requested to change the
9 funding mechanism for the Indian health service from a domestic
10 discretionary program to an entitlement program; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the president of the United States, the
13 president pro tempore of the United States senate, the speaker
14 of the United States house of representatives and the New
15 Mexico congressional delegation.