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SENATE MEMORIAL 66

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

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF CORRECTIONS TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH THE TASK FORCE APPOINTED TO IMPLEMENT AND DESIGN EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE FEMALE POPULATION IN THE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, in the past thirty years, the United States has seen an eight hundred percent increase in the incarceration of women and now has the highest incarceration rate for women worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the number of women incarcerated in New Mexico has tripled over the past fifteen years; and

WHEREAS, in July 2010, there were five hundred eighty-eight female prisoners in the state, housed at the New Mexico women's correctional facility in Grants, and eighty-five percent of these women have children, making their needs and concerns different from the needs and concerns of their male

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1 counterparts; and

2 WHEREAS, a task force appointed by the secretary of
3 corrections pursuant to several previous house and senate
4 memorials has been examining issues related to female inmates
5 and the increasing incarceration and recidivism rates
6 experienced by women; and

7 WHEREAS, the issues that this task force identified for
8 study and recommendation require continued examination,
9 particularly in light of an anticipated budget reduction for
10 the corrections department; and

11 WHEREAS, because of these budget reductions, the
12 corrections department will need to increase its reliance on
13 community collaborations and partnerships in the provision of
14 basic services and the development of innovative and unique
15 solutions for the female inmate population in order to ensure
16 the readiness of these women to reintegrate into their home
17 communities; and

18 WHEREAS, such collaborations have been shown to be
19 successful, both in New Mexico and throughout the country,
20 despite limited or reduced government resources; and

21 WHEREAS, the task force has initiated the implementation
22 of gender classification and reentry tools; worked toward
23 parole violation reduction; reviewed the current controlled
24 release pilot project; sought improvements to reentry
25 procedures and processes; worked toward strengthening the

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1 relationship with the interagency behavioral health purchasing
2 collaborative; explored various substance abuse treatments,
3 including medication-assisted therapies; explored alternatives
4 to the use of solitary confinement for women; investigated
5 medicaid enrollment for the children of inmates; and explored a
6 pilot work release program for women, utilizing advanced
7 technology; and

8 WHEREAS, the work of this task force must continue if the
9 state is to ensure the health, safety and well-being of women
10 incarcerated in New Mexico, as well as the safety of the
11 general public;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
13 OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of corrections be requested to
14 continue working with the task force appointed to implement and
15 design effective solutions for the female population in the
16 corrections system; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include the
18 warden of the New Mexico women's correctional facility and
19 representatives from corrections corporation of America;
20 correctional medical services; the adult probation and parole
21 division of the corrections department; the children, youth and
22 families department; the public defender department; the New
23 Mexico women's justice project; the New Mexico criminal defense
24 lawyers association; the commission on the status of women; the
25 judiciary; central New Mexico community college; a rape crisis

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1 center; the first judicial district attorney's office;
2 community practitioners in behavioral health and substance
3 abuse treatment; former female inmates who have completed their
4 sentences, including any on probation or parole; and other
5 interested and appropriate parties; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
7 continue to pursue the recommendations and solutions already
8 identified and to identify new recommendations and solutions
9 for females in the corrections system; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report on its
11 continued progress as well as any new findings, recommendations
12 and solutions to the appropriate interim legislative committee
13 during the 2011 interim; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the warden of the New Mexico women's
16 correctional facility; corrections corporation of America;
17 correctional medical services; the adult probation and parole
18 division of the corrections department; the children, youth and
19 families department; the public defender department; the New
20 Mexico women's justice project; the New Mexico criminal defense
21 lawyers association; the commission on the status of women;
22 central New Mexico community college; and the first judicial
23 district attorney's office.