

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 23

**50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012**

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL SERVICE TO ESTABLISH A PILOT PROJECT TO DETERMINE THE EFFICACY OF ALLOWING INTERIM COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO ATTEND MEETINGS BY REAL-TIME VIDEOCONFERENCE.

WHEREAS, the legislature's work continues to increase in both complexity and number and cannot be contained within the confines of sixty- and thirty-day sessions each January through March; and

WHEREAS, to help solve the potential knowledge gap presented by a part-time, citizen legislature, the legislature relies on interim committees to provide both education and thoughtful policy development on a range of topics; and

WHEREAS, because many citizen legislators must work during the interim, it may be difficult for them to take time off or

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1 to rearrange their schedules to attend interim committee  
2 meetings as often as they would like; and

3 WHEREAS, it is not so much the time of the committee  
4 meetings, but the to-and-from travel time that increases the  
5 burden on citizen legislators; and

6 WHEREAS, many legislators find that there are often agenda  
7 items of interest to them on interim committees on which they  
8 do not serve or that consider a topic from a different point of  
9 view than that considered by the member's interim committee;  
10 and

11 WHEREAS, advancements in technology have reached the point  
12 that members could attend and participate in meetings remotely;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, several other state legislatures have developed  
15 audio conferencing and videoconferencing capabilities for their  
16 members; and

17 WHEREAS, New Mexico's supercomputer, encanto, has robust  
18 videoconferencing capabilities with gateway facilities at  
19 twenty-eight locations in twenty-four cities around the state,  
20 primarily at post-secondary educational facilities;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
22 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council and  
23 the legislative council service be requested to establish a  
24 pilot project to determine the efficacy of allowing interim  
25 committee members to attend meetings by real-time

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1 videoconference when meetings are held at the state capitol or  
2 other locations at which acceptable videoconferencing  
3 capability is readily available; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative  
5 council ask at least five interim committees to participate in  
6 the pilot project and that the council, in conjunction with the  
7 chairpersons of the selected committees, determine:

8 A. whether participation should be limited to  
9 advisory members;

10 B. whether there should be limits on the number of  
11 members participating by videoconference at any one meeting;

12 C. the acceptable quality of necessary hardware and  
13 software to ensure that other committee members and the public  
14 attending a committee meeting can see and hear members  
15 participating by videoconference; and

16 D. whether there should be other restrictions on  
17 participation to ensure that the quality of committee meetings  
18 is not negatively affected; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that videoconferencing members  
20 shall not receive per diem and mileage during the pilot  
21 project; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative council  
23 service report to the New Mexico legislative council by  
24 December 31, 2012 on the success of the pilot project,  
25 including findings and recommendations that include potential

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1 savings from videoconference participation and detailed  
2 information on the need for hardware and software upgrades at  
3 the state capitol to make videoconferencing successful for  
4 committees and the public; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative council  
6 service survey committee members and the public to determine if  
7 the dynamic of committee meetings is negatively affected by  
8 members participating via technological interface and what  
9 improvements to the system should be made to ensure that  
10 videoconferencing meets the needs of interim committees as well  
11 as the public.