HOUSE MEMORIAL 76

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

INTRODUCED BY

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A 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 HOUSE OF

22   REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico

23   legislative council and the legislative council service be

24   requested to establish a pilot project to determine the

25   efficacy of allowing interim committee members to attend

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1   meetings by real-time videoconference when meetings are held at

2   the state capitol or other locations at which acceptable

3   videoconferencing 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.

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