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SENATE MEMORIAL 72

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

Gerald Ortiz y Pino

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO STUDY THE
PREVALENCE OF POLICE BRUTALITY IN NEW MEXICO AND TO IDENTIFY
STRATEGIES TO CONTROL AND PREVENT POLICE VIOLENCE.

WHEREAS, police brutality is characterized by excessive
and unnecessary force by police when dealing with civilians,
according to *Black's Law Dictionary*; and

WHEREAS, an excessive use of force includes a force well
beyond what would be necessary to handle a situation; and

WHEREAS, the most obvious form of police brutality is
physical, but police officers can use nerve gas, batons,
tasers, pepper spray and guns to intimidate civilians; and

WHEREAS, many countries have laws to address police
brutality, but many complaints made by civilians about
excessive use of force are still not investigated; and

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1 WHEREAS, researchers suggest that complaints may not be
2 investigated because police officers have the authority to use
3 force when necessary and it is often difficult to prove that
4 police brutality has taken place; and

5 WHEREAS, the United States has been under scrutiny for
6 increased incidences of alleged police brutality; and

7 WHEREAS, New Mexico law enforcement officers also have
8 come under increased scrutiny for incidents of police violence;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, an incident of Albuquerque police officers
11 shooting and killing a homeless camper received national
12 attention, resulting in an investigation by the federal bureau
13 of investigation and murder charges being filed against the
14 officers; and

15 WHEREAS, public officials have an obligation to monitor
16 the actions of law enforcement personnel and the increased
17 incidences of violence against innocent civilians; and

18 WHEREAS, the identification of methods to address police
19 violence would assist local officials to help ensure that
20 innocent civilians are not subjected to police violence; and

21 WHEREAS, the participation of local officials to study the
22 strategies to prevent and control violations of human civil
23 rights by police officers would benefit local communities;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
25 OF NEW MEXICO that the department of public safety be requested

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1 to study police violence and the use of excessive force and to
2 propose strategies to prevent and control police violence; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that New Mexico local elected
4 officials with law enforcement oversight of cities,
5 municipalities, towns and villages be requested to work with
6 the department of public safety to study strategies to prevent
7 and control violations of human civil rights by police
8 officers; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of public
10 safety be requested to report its findings and recommendations
11 to the appropriate interim legislative committee no later than
12 November 1, 2015; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
14 transmitted to the secretary of public safety and local
15 government officials.

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