A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PLANNING COUNCIL AND
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT AND
DISABILITY TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CONDUCT A NEEDS
ASSESSMENT AND REPORT ON WAYS TO IMPROVE THE SYSTEM OF SCHOOL-
TO-WORK TRANSITION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN NEW
MEXICO.

WHEREAS, a public education department post-school outcome
survey in 2012 reported that employment was declining for
individuals with any disability, but in particular for those
individuals reporting a developmental disability; and

WHEREAS, national data from the United States department
of labor reflects that more than seventy percent of students
with disabilities leave high school each year without
employment prospects; and

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WHEREAS, diminished employment prospects set a lifetime pattern and expectation of dependence on public assistance, poverty, inactivity and segregation from the community; and

WHEREAS, the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, which took effect on July 1, 2015, requires that states engage in a unified strategic planning process and collaborate to improve school-to-work transition outcomes for students with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the act provides a promising opportunity for New Mexico youth with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, for New Mexico to successfully comply with the new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act mandates, it is important for state and local agencies serving youth with disabilities to work cooperatively and to leverage their resources; and

WHEREAS, successful outcomes must engage local community organizations, advocacy groups and youth with disabilities and their families in planning and education; and

WHEREAS, the creation of a task force to include young adults with disabilities and state, local and community stakeholders would facilitate compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the developmental disabilities planning council and the university of New Mexico center for development
and disability be requested to convene a task force to conduct
a needs assessment and report on ways to improve the system of
school-to-work transition of students with disabilities in New
Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
make formal recommendations for changes to existing policies,
programs or regulatory provisions that would:

A. address barriers to effective school-to-work
transition for youth with disabilities;
B. result in more effective services for youth with
disabilities as they make the transition from school to work;
C. improve the efficiency of the school-to-work
transition process for students with disabilities;
D. increase the knowledge of students with
disabilities and their family members on transition from
school-to-work options; and
E. maximize outcomes, including lifelong
opportunities for persons with disabilities to obtain
competitive integrated employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be composed of
one or more young adults with disabilities who have
transitioned from high school to adult life and their family
members; and representatives of the developmental disabilities
planning council, the university of New Mexico center for
development and disability, parents reaching out, the
vocational rehabilitation division of the public education
department, the public education department, the developmental
disabilities supports division of the department of health, the
workforce solutions department, youth development inc.,
advocacy organizations, centers for independent living, the
governor's commission on disability and disability rights New
Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its
findings and recommendations to the legislative education study
committee by December 1, 2016; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
transmitted to the governor, the secretary of public education,
the executive director of the developmental disabilities
planning council and the president of the university of New
Mexico.

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