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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 2

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR A STRENGTHENED COMMITMENT TO THE
ELIMINATION OF THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, according to the national education association,
despite decades of overall progress in narrowing achievement
gaps, disparities in educational outcomes related to racial and
ethnic backgrounds persist; and

WHEREAS, minority students constitute seventy-five percent
of all students, totaling more than two hundred fifty thousand
students in the state; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a rising minority-majority state
whose minority numbers will continue to increase for
generations to come; and

WHEREAS, according to the public education department,
Latino students make up sixty-one percent of all students in

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1 the state, totaling more than two hundred twenty thousand
2 students; Native American students make up eleven percent,
3 totaling about thirty-three thousand students; African American
4 students make up two percent, totaling about seven thousand
5 students; and Caucasian students make up twenty-three percent,
6 totaling about seventy-eight thousand students; and

7 WHEREAS, in a report released by the Annie E. Casey
8 foundation, New Mexico is identified as the worst state in
9 which to raise a child; and

10 WHEREAS, the state would benefit from a new educational
11 paradigm to address the achievement gap; and

12 WHEREAS, the state's students represent its future
13 workforce; and

14 WHEREAS, New Mexico's children are its most precious
15 asset; and

16 WHEREAS, the cultural and linguistic diversity of the
17 state and equal opportunity for all New Mexicans should be
18 fostered; and

19 WHEREAS, the first judicial district court ruled in the
20 consolidated cases of *Yazzie v. State of New Mexico* and
21 *Martinez v. State of New Mexico* that the legislative and
22 executive branches of government must make changes to address
23 the achievement gap and provide for a "sufficient education"
24 for all students, which includes funding and programming; and

25 WHEREAS, as held in the *Yazzie/Martinez* decision, the

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1 funding provided has not been sufficient for all districts to
2 provide the programs and services required by the constitution
3 of New Mexico; and

4 WHEREAS, in the *Yazzie/Martinez* decision, the court
5 observed that it is the duty of the public education department
6 to provide a constitutionally adequate education system that
7 ensures that New Mexico schools have the resources necessary to
8 give at-risk students the opportunity to obtain a uniform and
9 sufficient education that prepares them for college and
10 careers; and

11 WHEREAS, the state must continue to implement the
12 standards stated in the Hispanic Education Act and the Indian
13 Education Act to aid in the elimination of the achievement gap;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, the state must address the achievement gap and
16 develop its human potential; and

17 WHEREAS, sufficient financial resources must be applied to
18 combat the achievement gap that minority students face;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislature's strengthened
21 commitment to providing sufficient education for all students
22 regardless of race be expressed; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all agencies of the state,
24 school districts and local governments be encouraged to work
25 together to commit to the elimination of the achievement gap

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1 between minority and non-minority students; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
3 transmitted to the secretary of public education, the chair of
4 the legislative education study committee and the executive
5 director of the national education association.