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HOUSE MEMORIAL 32

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

Angelica Rubio and Melanie Ann Stansbury and Jason C. Harper
and Gail Armstrong and Abbas Akhil

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO CONVENE A TASK
FORCE TO DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE LEGISLATIVE
PROCESS.

WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislative process has changed
dramatically over the last several decades and, with the
introduction of modern technology, continues to evolve at an
even faster pace; and

WHEREAS, the legislature has conducted numerous studies on
the structure and process of the legislature over the past
twenty years; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, the New Mexico legislative council
conducted a study on the roles, responsibilities, functions,
structures and organization of the legislative committee
process; and

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1 WHEREAS, the most recent formal study of the legislative
2 process was a two-year endeavor beginning in August 2006 with
3 the creation of a legislative structure and process study task
4 force that addressed a broad range of issues; and

5 WHEREAS, from these studies, several substantive
6 recommendations were adopted and have been implemented, such as
7 allowing members to co-sponsor legislation, allowing the
8 prefiling of legislation, reconfiguring interim committees,
9 opening conference committees to the public, expanding
10 legislator orientation and webcasting and archiving committee
11 meetings and floor sessions; and

12 WHEREAS, additionally, the biweekly "LegisLetter" and
13 online bill locator were created, legislators are afforded the
14 opportunity to attend up to five meeting days of committees to
15 which they are not appointed and bills endorsed by interim
16 committees or requested by state agencies are prohibited from
17 being introduced as duplicate bills in both houses; and

18 WHEREAS, a number of recommendations made by the task
19 force have yet to be adopted or implemented by the legislature;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, a review of those recommendations and the
22 development of new recommendations should be conducted with the
23 goal of continuing to improve the legislative process;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
25 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico

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1 legislative council be requested to convene a task force to
2 review, update and develop recommendations to improve the
3 operation of the legislature and that the task force be staffed
4 by the legislative council service; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative
6 council be requested to appoint to the task force four members
7 of the house of representatives and four members of the senate,
8 provided that no more than two members from each house be from
9 the same political party, and ten public members; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be provided
11 with the background, history and legal and constitutional
12 framework of the legislature; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
14 consider the following issues:

15 A. the length of legislative sessions compared with
16 states of similar size;

17 B. compensation of legislative members compared
18 with states of similar size;

19 C. strategies to reduce conflicts in the
20 legislative process;

21 D. staffing for legislators during the session and
22 the interim;

23 E. limiting the number of bills and memorials that
24 legislators may introduce;

25 F. developing a primer for citizen participation in

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1 the legislative process;

2 G. limiting the introduction of guests and
3 performances on the floor;

4 H. improving alignment of policy initiatives
5 proposed by interim committees with the development of the
6 general appropriation act;

7 I. planning and prioritizing capital outlay
8 funding;

9 J. the structure and efficacy of statutory and New-
10 Mexico-legislative-council-created interim committees; and

11 K. recommendations from previous studies addressing
12 issues that the task force deems relevant to its work; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
14 issue and make available to all legislators and the general
15 public a report of its findings and recommendations by October
16 1, 2020; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative
19 council and the director of the legislative council service.

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