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HOUSE MEMORIAL 56

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

INTRODUCED BY

Miguel P. Garcia

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE, OFFICE OF THE  
CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO HEALTH SCIENCES  
CENTER, TO NOMINATE SANJEEV ARORA, M.D., FOR THE NOBEL PRIZE IN  
PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE.

WHEREAS, every year, millions of people suffer and die  
needlessly from conditions and diseases that can be prevented,  
managed and cured, because of a lack of access to adequate  
health care; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, the world bank and world health  
organization reported that half the world lacks access to  
essential health services, let alone specialist services, for  
common, complex diseases such as human immunodeficiency virus  
and tuberculosis; and

WHEREAS, the imbalance of medical knowledge severely

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1 impacts rural, underserved communities and manifests in  
2 premature deaths, health disparities, economic burdens and low  
3 quality of life; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2003, to meet these challenges, Sanjeev Arora,  
5 M.D., a gastroenterologist at the university of New Mexico,  
6 conceived of and created extension for community healthcare  
7 outcomes, known as project ECHO, with his clinical team; and

8 WHEREAS, project ECHO was devised to address disparities  
9 in hepatitis C care for patients across New Mexico's remote  
10 areas; and

11 WHEREAS, Dr. Arora grew up in India in a family dedicated  
12 to working against poverty, disease and malnutrition; and

13 WHEREAS, he completed his pre-medical and medical degrees  
14 in New Delhi and New York, and became a gastroenterology fellow  
15 and then a faculty member at Tufts medical center and school of  
16 medicine in Boston; and

17 WHEREAS, Dr. Arora joined the university of New Mexico  
18 hospital faculty in 1993 as gastroenterology section chief and  
19 built clinical systems for the region's underserved patients;  
20 and

21 WHEREAS, project ECHO grew out of Dr. Arora's frustration  
22 with being unable to help the thousands of New Mexicans  
23 suffering from hepatitis C; and

24 WHEREAS, in 2003, over twenty-eight thousand New Mexicans  
25 had a hepatitis C diagnosis, yet fewer than five percent

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1 received treatment because not enough specialists were equipped  
2 to administer best-practice treatment for the disease; and

3 WHEREAS, the knowledge necessary to treat and even cure  
4 hepatitis C existed, but not in the communities where patients  
5 live; and

6 WHEREAS, Dr. Arora and his team connected a team of  
7 specialists at the university of New Mexico hub with community  
8 clinicians across the state, by videoconference, for mentoring  
9 and guided practice to treat hepatitis C patients; and

10 WHEREAS, eighteen months after project ECHO launched, wait  
11 time at the university of New Mexico clinic fell to two weeks,  
12 and in 2011, the ECHO team published results showing that ECHO-  
13 trained clinicians gave patients the same level of hepatitis C  
14 care as the university of New Mexico specialists provided; and

15 WHEREAS, sixteen years later, Dr. Arora and his team at  
16 the ECHO institute provide training and technical assistance  
17 and support to hundreds of global partners; and

18 WHEREAS, the ECHO institute team has raised over one  
19 hundred million dollars (\$100,000,000) to train over six  
20 hundred partner organizations around the world; and

21 WHEREAS, S.2873 - ECHO Act of 2016, and the proposed ECHO  
22 Act of 2019, confirmed federal commitment to funding  
23 organizations using the ECHO model to respond to areas of  
24 national need, like the opioid and immigration health crises;  
25 and

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1           WHEREAS, the United States department of defense and the  
2 United States department of veterans affairs use ECHO programs,  
3 as do organizations in forty-eight United States states, the  
4 United Kingdom, Australia, India and other countries; and

5           WHEREAS, since 2011, over two hundred peer-reviewed  
6 publications have documented project ECHO's effectiveness; and

7           WHEREAS, under Dr. Arora's leadership, the ECHO institute  
8 team, its hundreds of partners and thousands of providers who  
9 participate in ECHO programs make up the global ECHO movement,  
10 all committed to tipping the scales of health care disparities  
11 for the world's most vulnerable populations; and

12           WHEREAS, Dr. Arora's transformative work is worthy of  
13 consideration for the Nobel prize in physiology or medicine;  
14 and

15           WHEREAS, the right to submit proposals for the Nobel prize  
16 in physiology or medicine is set out in the statutes of the  
17 Nobel foundation and provides for the following:

18                   A. holders of established posts as full professors  
19 at the faculties of medicine in Sweden and holders of similar  
20 posts at the faculties of medicine or similar institutions in  
21 Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Norway; and

22                   B. holders of similar posts at fewer than six other  
23 faculties of medicine at universities around the world,  
24 selected by the Nobel assembly, with a view to ensuring the  
25 appropriate distribution of the task among various countries;

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1 and

2 WHEREAS, a full professor at the university of New Mexico  
3 health sciences may be entitled to nominate a candidate, with  
4 the provision that nominations from fewer than six faculties of  
5 medicine would be considered and the faculty would have to be  
6 selected by the Nobel assembly;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
8 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the dean of the  
9 school of medicine, office of the chancellor of the university  
10 of New Mexico health sciences center, be requested to nominate  
11 Sanjeev Arora, M.D., for the Nobel prize in physiology or  
12 medicine; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
14 transmitted to the dean of the school of medicine, office of  
15 the chancellor of the university of New Mexico health sciences  
16 center.

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