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SENATE MEMORIAL 20

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

INTRODUCED BY

William H. Payne

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A TASK
FORCE TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APPROPRIATE DISPLAY AND
CONSERVATION OF THE TWO BELLS FROM THE HISTORIC BATTLESHIP USS
NEW MEXICO, BB-40.

WHEREAS, the USS *New Mexico*, BB-40, was launched on April
23, 1917 and was christened by Margarita C de Baca, the
daughter of former New Mexico Governor Ezequiel Cabeza de Baca;
and

WHEREAS, the USS *New Mexico* was commissioned on May 20,
1918, becoming the first United States navy warship named after
New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the USS *New Mexico* was the lead ship of a class
of three super-dreadnought battleships, incorporating in her
design a revolutionary turbo-electric system of propulsion; and

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1 WHEREAS, the USS *New Mexico* served with distinction
2 throughout World War II, earning six battle stars and providing
3 critical shore bombardment in actions at the Aleutian islands,
4 Guam, Tarawa, the Marshall islands, the Mariana islands, Luzon
5 and Okinawa; and

6 WHEREAS, the USS *New Mexico* was struck twice by kamikaze
7 attacks, the first on January 6, 1945 and the second on May 12,
8 1945, resulting in the deaths of eighty-four crew members and
9 wounding more than two hundred others; and

10 WHEREAS, the USS *New Mexico* was decommissioned on July 19,
11 1946 and was sold for scrap on November 9, 1947; and

12 WHEREAS, the bell from the USS *New Mexico* that is on
13 display at the university of New Mexico is believed to have
14 come to the state in 1945; and

15 WHEREAS, the bell from the USS *New Mexico* that is
16 currently in the collections vault at the New Mexico history
17 museum came to the state in 1948; and

18 WHEREAS, the bell from the USS *New Mexico* that is on
19 display at the university of New Mexico is on loan to the state
20 from the naval history and heritage command; and

21 WHEREAS, in 1948, the United States congress donated the
22 bell that is in the collections vault at the New Mexico history
23 museum to New Mexico; and

24 WHEREAS, New Mexico, as the recipient of the bells, is
25 expected to display the bells in a careful, prudent, dignified

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1 and respectful manner so as to accurately reflect the history,
2 heritage and traditions of the naval service;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
4 OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural affairs department be requested
5 to convene a task force to make recommendations for the
6 appropriate display of the bells; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include one
8 representative of the cultural affairs department, one
9 representative of the department of military affairs, one
10 representative of the veterans' services department, one
11 representative of the facilities management division of the
12 general services department, one representative of the
13 university of New Mexico, one representative of the navy league
14 of the United States, New Mexico council and others with
15 expertise and interest in the history of the USS *New Mexico*,
16 BB-40; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force make
18 recommendations for how the bells might be best displayed and
19 identify any funding that might be necessary for the
20 appropriate display of the bells; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force present its
22 report and recommendations to the military and veterans'
23 affairs committee by October 2, 2020; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the secretary of cultural affairs, the secretary

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1 of veterans' services, the adjutant general of the department
2 of military affairs, the director of the facilities management
3 division of the general services department, the president of
4 the university of New Mexico, the president of the navy league
5 of the United States, New Mexico council and the co-chairs of
6 the military and veterans' affairs committee.

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