

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING A DESIGNEE FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY,
3 THE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW MEXICO LAW ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY, THE
4 DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TRAINING FOR THE NEW MEXICO LAW
5 ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY AND A DESIGNEE OF THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEES
6 RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION TO COLLABORATE AND STUDY THE ISSUES
7 REGARDING RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF NEW MEXICO LAW
8 ENFORCEMENT ACADEMY INSTRUCTORS AND PROVIDE A CONSENSUS
9 RECOMMENDATION TO THE LEGISLATIVE INTERIM COMMITTEE CHARGED
10 WITH REVIEWING MATTERS RELATED TO INVESTMENTS AND PENSIONS.
11

12 WHEREAS, the New Mexico law enforcement academy was
13 established by the legislature in 1969 as the "police
14 academy", later changing the name to the "New Mexico law
15 enforcement academy" in 1970; and

16 WHEREAS, law enforcement in New Mexico is working under
17 the president's task force on 21st century policing, whose
18 mandate was to identify best policing practices and offer
19 recommendations on how those practices can promote effective
20 crime reduction while building public trust; and

21 WHEREAS, inherent to best practices in policing is high-
22 quality training and standards; and

23 WHEREAS, with the best practices mandate top of mind,
24 the New Mexico law enforcement academy is expected by New
25 Mexico's chiefs of police and sheriffs to provide cutting-

1 edge training for officers and law enforcement staff, and
2 providing cutting-edge training requires subject matter
3 experts who are experienced and committed to the mission; and

4 WHEREAS, the New Mexico law enforcement academy
5 instructors are certified police officers, ideally with
6 several years of experience coupled with instructor
7 credentialing in critical areas of high-risk and technical
8 instruction; and

9 WHEREAS, the desired target instructor applicants are
10 officers with experience who are currently employed at
11 various law enforcement agencies throughout the state, and
12 those officers are covered under the public employees
13 retirement association's municipal police member coverage
14 plan five, which allows for enhanced retirement with twenty
15 years of service; and

16 WHEREAS, it is a nearly insurmountable obstacle for the
17 New Mexico law enforcement academy to attract the ideal
18 officers to fill instructor positions since those officers
19 would be leaving a municipal law enforcement position for
20 which they are eligible to retire after twenty years to
21 become an instructor at the New Mexico law enforcement
22 academy and be covered by a retirement plan requiring twenty-
23 five years of service to retire with a comparable retirement
24 benefit; and

25 WHEREAS, the New Mexico law enforcement academy is

1 powerless to equalize academy instructors' retirement
2 eligibility requirements with those of their municipal law
3 enforcement counterparts because current law requires that
4 academy instructors, regardless of years of experience and
5 specialized credentials, when hired by the academy, be moved
6 from the enhanced twenty-year retirement plan to the state
7 general member coverage plan three, which requires twenty-
8 five years of service before the officer can retire with a
9 comparable retirement benefit as provided under the municipal
10 police member coverage plan five; and

11 WHEREAS, requiring five additional years of service for
12 an officer to retire in order to receive a benefit comparable
13 to an officer working five fewer years presents a harsh and
14 significant barrier to instructor recruitment, and even
15 officers who are not planning to retire are understandably
16 reluctant to accept a position for which they would have to
17 give up the enhanced retirement option; and

18 WHEREAS, although positions for instructors have been
19 posted multiple times, the New Mexico law enforcement academy
20 remains only forty percent staffed in the instructor role;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, the New Mexico law enforcement academy is
23 committed to retaining the highest level of expectations in
24 the hiring of instructors, but without offering qualified
25 candidates a retirement level playing field, the academy

1 simply cannot compete with law enforcement agencies
2 statewide; and

3 WHEREAS, even though the New Mexico law enforcement
4 academy is the state's lead training academy relied upon by
5 county and municipal training academies, once officers who
6 would otherwise accept a New Mexico law enforcement academy
7 instructor position become aware of the five-year difference
8 in retirement eligibility, the officers do not apply; and

9 WHEREAS, unfortunately, the primary recruitment obstacle
10 for the New Mexico law enforcement academy is also the
11 primary retention obstacle because current academy
12 instructors would benefit by returning to local law
13 enforcement agencies so as to regain eligibility for twenty-
14 year retirement, and this fact has repeatedly played out as
15 the reason that highly credentialed instructors have left the
16 academy for employment at other law enforcement agencies; and

17 WHEREAS, solution-focused discussions with collaboration
18 among key stakeholders and policymakers for resolution of the
19 issues surrounding recruitment and retention of New Mexico
20 law enforcement academy instructors is a matter of
21 significant importance to the overall policing strategies and
22 capabilities of the state;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
24 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that a designee of
25 the department of public safety, the director of the New

1 Mexico law enforcement academy, the deputy director of
2 training for the New Mexico law enforcement academy and a
3 designee of the public employees retirement association be
4 requested to collaborate and study the issues regarding the
5 recruitment and retention of law enforcement academy
6 instructors and, through a consensus, make a recommendation
7 during the upcoming interim, no later than September 15,
8 2025, to the legislative interim committee charged with
9 reviewing matters related to investments and pensions; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to the governor, the New Mexico legislative
12 council, the secretary of public safety, the director of the
13 New Mexico law enforcement academy and the executive director
14 of the public employees retirement association. _____

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