

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO CONVENE A
3 TASK FORCE TO DEVELOP A TEN-YEAR PLAN AND FUNDING STRATEGY TO
4 ADDRESS MODERNIZATION AND SYSTEMIC PROBLEMS IN THE NEW MEXICO
5 CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM THAT INTERFERE WITH SYSTEM
6 PERFORMANCE, PUBLIC SAFETY AND EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW.

7
8 WHEREAS, *Policy Spotlight: Felony Arrests and Outcomes*,
9 a report by the legislative finance committee, examines
10 levels of serious crime in New Mexico in comparison to other
11 states; and

12 WHEREAS, *Policy Spotlight: Felony Arrests and Outcomes*
13 documents major impediments in the processing of individuals
14 arrested for crimes across law enforcement, district attorney
15 offices, the courts and corrections and reveals high rates of
16 case dismissals both prior to and at adjudication, resulting
17 in repeat offenses that often escalate in violence over time;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, *Policy Spotlight: Felony Arrests and Outcomes*
20 describes a lack of consistent reporting of crime, case
21 dismissals and case dispositions across the criminal justice
22 system, despite such reporting being required by law and
23 necessary for the legislature, the executive and the courts
24 to clearly identify justice system performance problems; and

25 WHEREAS, the *New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy Job Task*

1 and Curriculum Analysis final report published by the
2 international association of directors of law enforcement
3 external assessment under contract to the department of
4 public safety concluded that initial law enforcement
5 certification training is outdated and misaligned with
6 national standards, contributing to an undertrained public
7 safety workforce that is not consistently prepared to provide
8 scientifically valid evidence or respond effectively to
9 evolving criminal activity, and continuing education and
10 advanced and specialized training were found to be similarly
11 outdated; and

12 WHEREAS, training and education functions for criminal
13 justice system positions, currently located within operating
14 agencies, are understaffed and underfunded and should be
15 transferred to institutions of higher education to allow for
16 updated and enforceable standards; and

17 WHEREAS, program evaluation reports conducted by the
18 legislative finance committee have been shared with
19 legislative interim committees, and the testimony of experts
20 indicates consistently high vacancy and turnover rates in
21 critical positions within the criminal justice system
22 statewide, exacerbating inadequate responses to community
23 needs, delays in case processing and adjudication and
24 challenges in safely managing corrections and community
25 reentry functions; and

1 WHEREAS, local agencies with significant vacancy and
2 turnover rates lack both the resources and expertise to
3 evaluate alternative staffing strategies and deploy effective
4 recruiting strategies; and

5 WHEREAS, justice system positions are largely shaped by
6 diverse local practices and, with limited local exceptions,
7 have not adapted to twenty-first-century challenges, failing
8 to provide clear career pathways to retain existing personnel
9 or attract talented youth and mid-career professionals and
10 contributing to the loss of experienced New Mexico
11 professionals to other states; and

12 WHEREAS, the lack of oversight for law enforcement,
13 prosecution, adjudication and corrections undermines public
14 confidence in the criminal justice system; and

15 WHEREAS, presentations by the New Mexico association of
16 counties, the New Mexico municipal league and other
17 stakeholders report high rates of litigation and settlement
18 costs for alleged civil rights violations across the criminal
19 justice system, posing a threat to the financial viability of
20 local governments;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
22 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the
23 legislative finance committee be requested to convene a task
24 force to develop a ten-year plan and funding strategy to
25 address and modernize systemic problems in the New Mexico

1 criminal justice system that interfere with system
2 performance, public safety and equal justice under the law;
3 and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative finance
5 committee be requested to develop and lead a task force to
6 develop recommendations for the legislature to:

7 A. establish a planning and oversight strategy to
8 elaborate and monitor implementation of the plan;

9 B. create a funding strategy to support the plan;
10 and

11 C. identify critical first legislative actions
12 responsive to key critical issues; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force consist of
14 representation from stakeholders within the criminal justice
15 system and interested citizens that represent the geographic
16 and cultural diversity of the state, including justice system
17 prevention program leaders, 911 agency leaders, law
18 enforcement agency leadership, tribal and pueblo law
19 enforcement, the New Mexico state police division of the
20 department of public safety, prosecutors, diversion program
21 leaders, public defender and defense bar leadership, juvenile
22 probation and parole leaders, juvenile detention center
23 leaders, magistrate and district court judges, specialty
24 court and children's court judges, correctional officer
25 leadership, probation officer leadership, representation of

1 sentencing commission, interested citizens at large and
2 legislators; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the membership not exceed
4 thirty members and that applicants be selected by four
5 legislators, one from each party within the house of
6 representatives and senate to be appointed by the speaker of
7 the house and the president pro tempore of the senate in
8 consultation with the legislative finance committee staff
9 assigned to administer the task force; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative finance
11 committee leadership for the task force be requested to
12 provide opportunities to present information and
13 recommendations to the task force by the administrative
14 office of the courts, the administrative office of the
15 district attorneys, the corrections department, the
16 department of public safety, the children, youth and families
17 department, the state department of justice, the higher
18 education department, the regulation and licensing
19 department, the New Mexico association of counties and the
20 New Mexico municipal league; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force elect a chair
22 and co-chair to facilitate task force decision making on
23 recommendations and that legislative finance committee staff
24 develop agendas and prepare materials for task force
25 deliberations with input from members, as well as

1 consultation with experts; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that recommendations be made
3 regarding establishing a fund to be invested such that income
4 generated will support the goals established by the task
5 force; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force's goals
7 include:

8 A. establishing a planning and oversight body to
9 integrate local planning into a state-level modernization
10 plan for the justice system and monitor implementation for at
11 least ten years;

12 B. establishing a process for modernizing justice
13 system position descriptions, educational requirements and
14 staffing adequacy;

15 C. ensuring ongoing updating of all educational
16 curriculum and training methods to national standards and
17 best practices;

18 D. establishing a planning function at the
19 judicial district level to adapt and link state programs to
20 meet local needs and link that planning system to the system
21 established in 2025 for behavioral health services as
22 administered by the administrative office of the courts;

23 E. identifying work groups and a process to define
24 standardized data elements needed to evaluate system
25 performance at system institutions and for the system as a

1 whole;

2 F. establishing a process to plan for career paths
3 for justice system professionals, with linkage to the state
4 college system; and

5 G. recommending legislation for the 2027
6 legislative session to address the most immediate needs
7 related to these goals; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested
9 to submit a report on its findings and recommendations to the
10 interim committee that studies courts, corrections and
11 justice issues by November 26, 2026 and by January 5, 2027 to
12 the governor and the legislature for consideration during the
13 first session of the fifty-eighth legislature; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the staff of the legislative finance committee,
16 the office of the governor, the attorney general, the
17 administrative office of the courts, the administrative office
18 of the district attorneys and the chief public defender. _____

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