

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 51

2 **46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
12 CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY TO DETERMINE POTENTIAL CHANGES TO
13 THE BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION ACT TO BETTER SERVE THE
14 STUDENTS IN NEW MEXICO.

15
16 WHEREAS, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act ensures
17 equal education opportunities for students in New Mexico; and

18 WHEREAS, the state appropriated more than thirty-seven
19 million dollars (\$37,000,000) in the 2003 academic school year
20 to provide for the educational needs of linguistically and
21 culturally different students, including Native American
22 students, in grades kindergarten through twelve; and

23 WHEREAS, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act
24 requires that the state give funding priority to bilingual
25 muliticultural education programs for grades kindergarten

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1 through three in a public school or any combination of public
2 schools in a school district; and

3 WHEREAS, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act
4 mandates that state funding support bilingual multicultural
5 education programs for culturally and linguistically different
6 students in grades kindergarten through twelve for whom there
7 is an identifiable need to improve their language capabilities;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act
10 mandates that state funding support the use of two languages as
11 part of instruction within the curriculum at the grade levels
12 within the program; and

13 WHEREAS, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act allows
14 only teachers who have specialized in elementary or secondary
15 education and who have received specific training in bilingual
16 education to teach in bilingual multicultural education
17 programs; and

18 WHEREAS, the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act
19 emphasizes the importance of the history, culture and heritage
20 associated with the student's home language; and

21 WHEREAS, the legislative finance committee conducted an
22 audit of the state's bilingual multicultural education program
23 in late 2003 and recommended that the legislature consider
24 amending the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act to clarify
25 program purpose and to provide direction on program priorities;

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1 and

2 WHEREAS, the legislature is committed to reforming the
3 education system to ensure that education funding is well-spent
4 and reduces the achievement gap among students in New Mexico;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
6 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study
7 committee, in collaboration with the public education
8 department, be requested to conduct a feasibility study to
9 determine potential changes to the Bilingual Multicultural
10 Education Act to better serve the students in New Mexico; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
12 study committee report its findings to the legislative finance
13 committee by November 2004; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the legislative education study committee, the
16 public education department and the legislative finance
17 committee.