

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 31

48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2007

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO DIRECT THE
APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATURE TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF REQUIRING A RACIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF PROPOSED
LEGISLATION.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a minority, majority, multicultural
state where sixty-seven percent of all New Mexico children are
children of color, fifty-one percent are Hispanic, twelve
percent are Native American, two percent are African American
and two percent Asian, while only thirty-three percent are
white non-Hispanic and over thirty percent of minority youth
under eighteen years old live in poverty; and

WHEREAS, race is simultaneously a matter of social
structure, representation and lived experience and not a
biological fact and race has real consequences for children in

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1 a wide range of social, educational and economic institutions;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, those consequences and lived experiences of
4 children in New Mexico are often created and maintained through
5 processes, attitudes and behaviors that are intentionally and
6 unintentionally fostered by structural racism and by policies,
7 practices and laws that are structural racism and that this is
8 evident in the unequal outcomes in the health, success and
9 wellness of children of color in New Mexico; and

10 WHEREAS, optimal mental health is essential to prosperity
11 and well-being and access to mental health and physical health
12 is related to insurance status, and forty percent of Native
13 American youth, eighteen percent of African American youth and
14 seventeen percent of Hispanic youth are uninsured while only
15 fifteen percent of white non-Hispanic youth are without
16 insurance coverage; and

17 WHEREAS, youth suicide rates for New Mexico males ages
18 fifteen to twenty-four in 1999 through 2004 were far higher for
19 youth of color than for white non-Hispanic youth; and

20 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, Hispanic females fifteen to
21 nineteen years old have birth rates more than twice that of
22 their white non-Hispanic counterparts; and

23 WHEREAS, because of racism's negative impacts on
24 behavioral health across generations and individual life spans,
25 New Mexicans should work to eliminate structural racism in New

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1 Mexico;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
3 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be
4 requested to direct the appropriate committee to study the
5 feasibility and cost of requiring a racial impact statement for
6 certain health and mental health legislation to determine the
7 potential for disparate outcomes for children of color; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee make
9 recommendations to the New Mexico legislature by January 1,
10 2008; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to members of the New Mexico legislative council.