

HOUSE MEMORIAL 110

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO AND THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE AND NEED FOR EXPANSION OF THE NATIVE AMERICAN STUDIES PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO TO INCLUDE A MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico and the Indian nations, tribes and pueblos of New Mexico have a pressing need for college-educated Native American students who are prepared to assist in the positive educational, economic and social development and maintenance of their communities and the state; and

WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico's Native American studies program is an interdisciplinary program whose field of study explores the richness of American Indian cultures,

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1 examines the nature of historic and contemporary issues and  
2 prepares students to engage in careers and service to New  
3 Mexico Indian communities; and

4 WHEREAS, a major in Native American studies was approved  
5 by the board of regents for the 2004-2005 academic year, and  
6 the program has since had four graduating classes and has  
7 awarded over one hundred majors and minors, its students  
8 graduating in one of four concentration areas, with a focus on  
9 building native nations, leadership and community-based  
10 research and development; and

11 WHEREAS, currently, there is increased interest in the  
12 Native American studies program, with enrollment growing from  
13 only seven minors during the 2001-2002 academic year to over  
14 one hundred thirty majors and minors during the 2008-2009  
15 academic year; and

16 WHEREAS, the Native American studies program currently  
17 offers an average of twenty-six courses per semester through  
18 its core, adjunct and affiliated faculty; and

19 WHEREAS, the Native American studies program, in agreement  
20 with the university of New Mexico's extended university, offers  
21 courses in Native American studies at the university's branch  
22 campuses in Gallup, Taos, Valencia, Los Alamos, Bernalillo,  
23 Santa Fe and Farmington, where combined enrollments number over  
24 three thousand Native American students; and

25 WHEREAS, faculty have developed a proposal for a master's

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1 degree in Native American studies, unique among tier one  
2 universities in that its emphasis will be on indigenous  
3 leadership, self-determination and sustainable community  
4 development; and

5 WHEREAS, the master's degree will form the foundation for  
6 an equally unique doctorate degree in indigenous sustainable  
7 community development, which has also been proposed; and

8 WHEREAS, the Native American studies program at the  
9 university of New Mexico compares and even surpasses program  
10 offerings at other peer southwest institutions, such as the  
11 university of Arizona, Arizona state university, northern  
12 Arizona university and the university of Oklahoma; and

13 WHEREAS, the program is at a critical juncture in its  
14 development, having reached its growth limit, given the current  
15 budget, and the development of a master's and, eventually, a  
16 doctorate program in Native American studies cannot be  
17 accomplished with current funding; and

18 WHEREAS, the high enrollment numbers in Native American  
19 undergraduate courses, and probable continued high enrollment  
20 figures, mean that future appropriations will be needed to  
21 augment faculty, staff and program development;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
23 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the board of  
24 regents of the university of New Mexico and the higher  
25 education department be requested to recognize the need for

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1 continued support and funding for the Native American studies  
2 program at the university of New Mexico, as well as the need  
3 for expansion of the program to include a master's degree to  
4 provide future Native American undergraduate students with the  
5 opportunity to continue their higher education by pursuing a  
6 master's degree at the university of New Mexico; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
8 transmitted to the board of regents of the university of New  
9 Mexico and the secretary of higher education.

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