

A JOINT MEMORIAL

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A STAGED, MULTIYEAR PLAN TO IMPROVE HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE LABORATORY FACILITIES, AS DESCRIBED IN NEW MEXICO PROJECT 2012.

WHEREAS, education is the key to the twenty-first century, both in terms of economic prosperity and personal achievement; and

WHEREAS, today's new economy is knowledge-based, entrepreneurial and globally competitive to an extent that was almost unimaginable even a decade ago; and

WHEREAS, a competitive, technically capable work force is essential to New Mexico's economic future; and

WHEREAS, an essential way for students to acquire technical capability and skill is via experience-based, hands-on learning and problem solving in a high school laboratory setting; and

WHEREAS, learning in science is based on the core principle of the scientific method, which includes hypothesis development, experimental testing of that hypothesis and hypothesis revision based on what has been learned; and

WHEREAS, use of the scientific method is a critical part of almost all science-related activities; and

WHEREAS, the ways in which laboratory science is learned and carried out are rapidly evolving due to novel web-based

materials, courses and demonstrations; the enormous impact of computers in almost all aspects of scientific and technical work; and the advent of modern instruments for laboratory measurement and analysis; and

WHEREAS, improving and equipping our public high school science laboratories to present a modern, exciting portal into science and technology is one of the major recommendations of New Mexico Project 2012, the proposal for comprehensive, transformational change in the way kindergarten through twelfth grade mathematics and science education is carried out in New Mexico;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it express its support for the development of a thorough plan for revamping public high school science laboratories in accordance with the New Mexico Project 2012 concepts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the plan be conducted by the public school facilities authority under the guidance of the mathematics and science bureau of the public education department and that it include costs and time lines for providing our public high school students with modern high school science laboratories and other resources to give them the ability to acquire the knowledge and technical capability they will need to be successful in the new economy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the plan take into account

the balance between the needs for new building infrastructure and laboratory equipment on the one hand and the possible economies to be achieved by carrying out virtual laboratory exercises via the web and in distance learning environments, as well as other considerations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a status report on the plan be transmitted to the legislative education study committee no later than December 2010; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the public education department, the legislative education study committee and the coalition of school administrators for appropriate distribution.