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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 16

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

Rick Miera and Timothy M. Keller

A JOINT MEMORIAL

URGING THE GOVERNOR, MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF
GOVERNMENT AND MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATURE TO TAKE MEANINGFUL
STEPS TO RECOGNIZE THE VALUE, AND RESPECT THE DIGNITY, OF
INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE DEVELOPMENTALLY DISABLED.

WHEREAS, developmental disability is a natural part of the
human experience, affecting thousands of New Mexico children
and adults and millions of Americans; and

WHEREAS, all people with developmental disabilities can be
productive, contributing members of their communities; and

WHEREAS, according to the Cornell university disability
status report, the prevalence of disability in New Mexico in
2008 was thirteen and six-tenths percent of people of all ages;
and

WHEREAS, the employment rate of working-age people living

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1 with disabilities in New Mexico in 2008 was forty-one and one-
2 fifth percent; and

3 WHEREAS, in order to be actively employed, it is often
4 necessary to drive to one's place of employment, an activity
5 that should be available to those with developmental
6 disabilities in the same way as it is available to the general
7 public; and

8 WHEREAS, the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance
9 and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 seeks to ensure that individuals
10 with developmental disabilities are able to participate fully
11 in their communities through integration and inclusion in the
12 economic, political, social, cultural, religious and
13 educational sectors of society; and

14 WHEREAS, that federal act seeks to ensure that individuals
15 with developmental disabilities and their families participate
16 in the design of, and have access to, culturally competent
17 services, supports and other assistance and opportunities that
18 promote independence, productivity, integration and inclusion
19 in the community; and

20 WHEREAS, according to the mission statement of the New
21 Mexico center for development and disability, the full
22 inclusion of individuals with developmental disabilities and
23 their families into their communities involves engaging
24 individuals in making life choices, partnering with communities
25 to build resources and improving systems of care; and

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1 WHEREAS, behaviors and attitudes of state government and
2 members of the legislature should reflect these goals in any
3 interactions with individuals with developmental disabilities,
4 whether in the public or in private settings; and

5 WHEREAS, language is a reflection of how people see each
6 other, and it can be used to build up or tear down a person's
7 self-esteem; and

8 WHEREAS, responsible communicators carefully choose
9 language that reflects the dignity of people with developmental
10 disabilities, opting for words that put the person, rather than
11 the disability, first; and

12 WHEREAS, all opportunities to treat adults and children
13 with developmental disabilities with respect should be pursued
14 at every opportunity in order to promote positive perceptions
15 of all people in all walks of life, including those individuals
16 with developmental disabilities;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
18 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor, members of the executive
19 branch of government and members of the legislature be urged to
20 take meaningful steps to recognize the value and respect the
21 dignity of individuals who are developmentally disabled; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this respect and value be
23 reflected in policy, in personal interactions with individuals
24 with developmental disabilities and in the consideration of
25 legislative initiatives; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a sincere and dedicated effort
2 be exerted to identify and eradicate incidents of harsh
3 labeling used in official dialogue and official documents
4 throughout government in the state; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the governor, all cabinet secretaries and the
7 university of New Mexico center for development and disability.

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