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HOUSE MEMORIAL 25

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

INTRODUCED BY

Sandra D. Jeff

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE VETERANS' SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO INVESTIGATE THE
FEASIBILITY OF LOCATING IN SANTA FE A VETERANS MEMORIAL
HONORING NEW MEXICO'S NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico has the second largest Native American
population in the country, trailing only Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans have played a significant role
in the military history of our nation; and

WHEREAS, the United States department of veterans affairs
estimates that there are more than nine thousand Native
American veterans living in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, ever since World War I was declared, shortly
after New Mexico gained statehood, our state's Native Americans
have had the highest per capita rate of military service of any
ethnic group in the country; and

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1 WHEREAS, World War II historians credit the Navajo code
2 talkers with devising a communication code, based on their
3 Navajo language, that was undecipherable to the Japanese
4 military and, thus, helped allied forces turn the tide in the
5 Pacific theater and bring an end to the biggest global war in
6 the history of civilization; and

7 WHEREAS, during the Korean conflict and the Vietnam
8 conflict, Native Americans once again had the highest per
9 capita rate of military service of any ethnic population in the
10 nation, serving in combat roles in disproportionately large
11 numbers, which put them at increased risk compared to any other
12 ethnic group; and

13 WHEREAS, high percentages of Native American men and women
14 continue to serve in the military, recently in the global war
15 on terror in Iraq and currently in Afghanistan; and

16 WHEREAS, these Native Americans are strong exemplars of
17 the "Warrior Spirit" inherent in Native American culture, a
18 spirit that Native American veterans have historically drawn
19 upon to give them strength, honor, pride, devotion and wisdom,
20 just as their ancestors did when defending their native land
21 during our nation's colonial expansion; and

22 WHEREAS, currently, nothing exists in Santa Fe, New
23 Mexico's capital and the political, historical and tourism hub
24 of the state, to honor these brave warriors who not only
25 proudly represented their tribal nations, but patriotically

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1 served the United States of America by answering calls to arms
2 against the enemies that have threatened the freedoms of all
3 Americans;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
5 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the veterans'
6 services department be requested to investigate the feasibility
7 of locating in Santa Fe a veterans memorial honoring New
8 Mexico's Native American veterans; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the secretary of veterans' services.