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SENATE MEMORIAL 87

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012

INTRODUCED BY

Carlos R. Cisneros

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO INSTALL A BRIDGE
BARRIER ON THE RIO GRANDE GORGE BRIDGE IN ORDER TO PREVENT
SUICIDE ATTEMPTS.

WHEREAS, deaths resulting from suicide attempts or
accidental falls from the Rio Grande gorge bridge in Taos
county have increased in recent years; and

WHEREAS, the cost of rescue efforts and the danger to
emergency responders have increased commensurately with such
incidents; and

WHEREAS, the Rio Grande gorge bridge has become a
significant tourist attraction, and the increasing traffic on
the bridge also contributes to higher risks to visitors and
public safety personnel; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico currently ranks second in the United

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1 States for its suicide rate, which is one and one-half to two
2 times the national average; and

3 WHEREAS, more suicides occur in rural areas than in urban
4 areas; and

5 WHEREAS, every fourteen minutes twelve seconds, someone in
6 the United States dies by suicide; and

7 WHEREAS, the suicide rate among males is four times higher
8 than that of females; and

9 WHEREAS, suicide is the ninth leading cause of death for
10 New Mexicans; and

11 WHEREAS, suicide is the second leading cause of death
12 among persons fifteen to twenty-four years of age and the
13 fourth leading cause of death among persons thirty-five to
14 fifty-four years of age; and

15 WHEREAS, suicide at the Rio Grande gorge bridge accounts
16 for over fifty percent of all suicides in the Taos county area;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, the national suicide prevention lifeline steering
19 committee has stated its position that the use of bridge
20 barriers is the most effective means of bridge suicide
21 prevention;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
23 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of transportation be
24 requested to construct or install bridge barriers and
25 safety-enhancing improvements to the Rio Grande gorge bridge on

.189884.1

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1 United States highway 64 in Taos county; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of
3 transportation report the status of the construction or
4 installation of suicide prevention barriers on the Rio Grande
5 gorge bridge to the appropriate interim committee of the
6 legislature by December 1, 2012; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
8 transmitted to the secretary of transportation.

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