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SENATE MEMORIAL 64

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2020

INTRODUCED BY

Shannon D. Pinto

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES, THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO AND THE NAVAJO NATION COLLABORATIVELY TAKE PROACTIVE STEPS TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE INFRASTRUCTURE AND FACILITIES SPECIFICALLY FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN AS PART OF THE PROPOSED GALLUP INDIAN MEDICAL CENTER.

WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives are at greater mortality risk from many health issues and injuries than the rest of the United States population and have mortality rates that are five hundred forty-eight percent greater for alcoholism, two hundred percent greater for death by a motor vehicle, one hundred eighty-two percent greater for diabetes mellitus, one hundred thirty-eight percent greater for unintentional injuries, seventy-five percent greater for poisoning, seventy-five percent greater for homicide, seventy-

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1 five percent greater for suicide, thirty-seven percent greater
2 for pneumonia and influenza and twenty-seven percent greater
3 for firearm injury; and

4 WHEREAS, among American Indians and Alaska Natives, deaths
5 from accidents, diabetes, suicide and chronic liver disease and
6 cirrhosis are two to three times higher than among non-Natives;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, compared to other American Indians and Alaska
9 Natives, Navajos have lower percentages of high school and
10 college graduates, lower household incomes and a lower
11 percentage of women receiving prenatal care; and

12 WHEREAS, compared to other American Indians and Alaska
13 Natives, Navajos have higher rates of unemployment, poverty,
14 homicide and suicide, unintentional injury-related deaths and
15 mothers with diabetes; and

16 WHEREAS, the majority of American Indians and Alaska
17 Natives living in New Mexico reside in McKinley, San Juan and
18 Bernalillo counties; and

19 WHEREAS, the percentage of births to single women in 2017
20 was highest for American Indians and Alaska Natives at seventy-
21 seven and one-half percent, and single-parent births have
22 increased among American Indians and Alaska Natives by twenty-
23 four and two-tenths percent since 1990; and

24 WHEREAS, the percentage of preterm deliveries for American
25 Indian and Alaska Native women in New Mexico increased from

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1 eight and three-tenths percent to ten and one-half percent from
2 2013 to 2017; and

3 WHEREAS, the birth rate is highest at one hundred twenty-
4 six and seven-tenths per one thousand women for American Indian
5 and Alaska Native women aged twenty to twenty-four in New
6 Mexico; and

7 WHEREAS, the death rate is highest for New Mexican
8 American Indians and Alaska Natives at nine hundred sixty-seven
9 and four-tenths per one hundred thousand; and

10 WHEREAS, the average adverse childhood experiences score
11 is estimated at four among American Indians and Alaska Natives;
12 and

13 WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences have been shown to
14 have long-lasting effects on many aspects of a person's life as
15 indicated by health outcomes; and

16 WHEREAS, six hundred sixty-six cases were referred to
17 child protective services in Shiprock from 2014 to 2017; and

18 WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives died younger
19 than other racial and ethnic groups in 2017, and nearly one-
20 half of those who died were between the ages of fifteen and
21 sixty-four; and

22 WHEREAS, American Indian and Alaska Native death rates
23 increased from 2014 to 2016; and

24 WHEREAS, from 2007 to 2017, there were two hundred sixty-
25 four suicides and one hundred ninety-one homicides among

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1 American Indians and Alaska Natives in McKinley and San Juan
2 counties; and

3 WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives had the
4 highest death rates due to accidents and neonatal infant
5 mortality; and

6 WHEREAS, American Indians and Alaska Natives in New Mexico
7 had the highest death rate for ages one through four and
8 fifteen through sixty-four; and

9 WHEREAS, infant mortality rates were highest for American
10 Indian and Alaska Native mothers aged fifteen to nineteen; and

11 WHEREAS, the costs of death and illness are felt by
12 families and entire communities; and

13 WHEREAS, families and communities are impacted by the loss
14 of potential years of productivity and contributions to the
15 economy; and

16 WHEREAS, the increased risk of poor health outcomes and
17 early death for American Indians and Alaska Natives can lead to
18 survivor poverty, hardship, chronic illness and early death;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, there are few dedicated resources for women and
21 children, and those resources are often located at great
22 distances from those who need them; and

23 WHEREAS, the lack of available resources creates ongoing
24 trauma for women and children, who often live in very rural and
25 remote communities; and

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1 WHEREAS, despite outreach by some organizations and
2 professionals, many women and children still do not have access
3 to resources due to lack of funding or transportation; and

4 WHEREAS, violence against women and children is related to
5 incidence of family violence, control and restrictions, which
6 often go unreported or are reported years after the crime
7 occurred; and

8 WHEREAS, even when health care is sought, women and
9 children may not be able to attend follow-up appointments that
10 are necessary for healthy delivery of babies and chronic
11 disease management; and

12 WHEREAS, facilities and funding for victims of sexual
13 violence are not available to sustain needed services,
14 including comprehensive care and mobile facilities with twenty-
15 four-hour dedicated staff, examiners, advocates and nurses in
16 addition to Indian health service hospitals and emergency
17 rooms; and

18 WHEREAS, many health problems and injuries are symptoms of
19 adverse childhood experiences and resulting trauma that have
20 been unattended by health, public safety, judicial and other
21 public service systems;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
23 OF NEW MEXICO that the United States, the state of New Mexico
24 and the Navajo Nation be requested to collaboratively take
25 proactive steps to provide health care infrastructure and

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1 facilities specifically for women and children as part of the
2 proposed Gallup Indian medical center and satellite clinics,
3 including health centers, health stations and school clinics in
4 remote locations for access to mental and physical
5 comprehensive care; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that victims of sexual violence be
7 provided comprehensive care facilities and mobile units with
8 sustained funding for twenty-four-hour dedicated staff,
9 examiners, advocates, counselors and nurses with private
10 interview environments in addition to Indian health service
11 hospital inpatient, outpatient and emergency room staff; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
13 transmitted to the New Mexico congressional delegation, the
14 governor and New Mexico's twenty-three Indian nations, tribes
15 and pueblos.