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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 24

43RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 1997

INTRODUCED BY

JAMES ROGER MADALENA

FOR THE INDIAN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

ENCOURAGING AN INCREASE IN THE STAFF OF THE INDIAN EDUCATION
DIVISION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION TO IMPROVE
THE STATUS OF INDIAN STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

WHEREAS, in 1975 the Indian education division was created
within the state department of public education to provide
direct assistance to tribes and school districts so that the
education needs of Indian students enrolled in public schools in
New Mexico would be addressed; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is home to twenty-two indigenous Indian
tribes, including the Navajo, Jicarilla Apache, Mescalero Apache
and nineteen Pueblo tribes, comprising ten and four-tenths
percent of the student population; and

WHEREAS, there are thirty-three thousand eight hundred
thirty American Indian students in the New Mexico public school

Underscored material = new
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1 system; and

2 WHEREAS, Indian students have unique educational needs
3 stemming from a richness and difference in language, culture and
4 history and these needs must be addressed by our educational
5 system; and

6 WHEREAS, at the White House conference on Indian education
7 in 1991, one continuing need identified was for improved
8 training and selection of teachers for public schools serving
9 predominantly Indian populations, as well as the development of
10 curriculum that considers the cultural differences of Indian
11 students; and

12 WHEREAS, according to the Iowa tests of basic skills given
13 in 1994-95, in comparison to other ethnic groups tested,
14 including Anglos, Hispanics and Blacks, American Indian students
15 scored the lowest in all three subtests given; and

16 WHEREAS, according to the policy statement on Indian
17 education approved by the state board of education in 1986, the
18 state's mission is to provide equal opportunities for all
19 students, including American Indians; and

20 WHEREAS, the policy statement issued by the state board of
21 education encourages systemic reform that emphasizes local
22 control and government-to-government relationships with the
23 tribes as well as a shared responsibility with tribal entities
24 and Indian parents toward the goal of quality education; and

25 WHEREAS, all concerned with the education of Indian

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1 students, including parents, school districts, local school
2 boards, the superintendent of public instruction, the state
3 department of public education and the tribes, must find ways to
4 address the high dropout rate, high absenteeism rate and low
5 achievement test scores of Indian students; and

6 WHEREAS, to improve the status of Indian students in public
7 schools, parental involvement is needed as well as the
8 involvement of Indian communities in textbook and material
9 assessment to ensure the quality and appropriateness of texts
10 used in public schools; and

11 WHEREAS, with the small staff of the Indian education
12 division, it is difficult if not impossible to address the
13 serious needs of Indian students in the state; and

14 WHEREAS, the Indian education center for excellence,
15 established in 1990 as a special project under the division to
16 research and identify effective educational practices reflecting
17 tribal perspectives, was terminated June 30, 1996; and

18 WHEREAS, the mission of the Indian education division can
19 only be accomplished through planning, development,
20 implementation and evaluation of programs currently designed for
21 Indian students; and

22 WHEREAS, the division also serves as a liaison between
23 tribes, the state department of public education, the local
24 education agencies, federal programs and other agencies that
25 directly affect services for Indian students; and

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1 FORTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
2 FIRST SESSION, 1997
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5 March 15, 1997
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7 Mr. President:
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9 Your EDUCATION COMMITTEE, to whom has been referred
10

11 HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 24
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13 has had it under consideration and reports same with
14 recommendation that it DO PASS.
15

16 Respectfully submitted,
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21 Cynthia Nava, Chairman
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25 Adopted _____ Not Adopted _____
(Chief Clerk) (Chief Clerk)

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Date _____

The roll call vote was 6 For 0 Against

Yes: 6

No: 0

Excused: Boitano, Duran, Gorham, Rawson

Absent: None

HJ024ED1