

1 SENATE MEMORIAL 103

2 **51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2013**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 William H. Payne

5
6
7
8
9
10 A MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE VETERANS' SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO DEVELOP A DRAFT
12 STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINING VETERANS' ISSUES IN NEW MEXICO.

13
14 WHEREAS, there are over one hundred seventy thousand
15 veterans who are residents of the state of New Mexico; and

16 WHEREAS, a significant number of New Mexico veterans have
17 come home and will continue to return due to the drawdown of
18 forces from Iraq and Afghanistan; and

19 WHEREAS, a research project conducted by the army war
20 college and published in 2012 states that during drawdowns, the
21 nation historically reduces defense spending to about three
22 hundred seventy-five billion dollars (\$375,000,000,000), in
23 real terms, and that currently the nation is expending six
24 hundred forty-six billion dollars (\$646,000,000,000) for
25 defense, including war-related funding, on top of the five-

.194106.2

underscored material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

underscoring material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 hundred-thirty-one-billion-dollar (\$531,000,000,000) base
2 defense budget; and

3 WHEREAS, with decreasing operations in Afghanistan, the
4 nation's challenging fiscal and economic situations will demand
5 significant reductions in the base defense budget, estimating
6 that if the nation follows historical patterns during the
7 global war on terror drawdown, it may reduce the base defense
8 budget by about twenty-four percent over the next ten years,
9 approximately one trillion four hundred billion dollars
10 (\$1,400,000,000,000), which is more reductions than
11 sequestration requires in the federal Budget Control Act of
12 2011; and

13 WHEREAS, under such a drawdown scenario, the United States
14 department of defense would have to consider a reduction of
15 five hundred thousand active duty service members, particularly
16 given the increased costs of manpower, which have grown sixty-
17 three percent since the nation implemented the all-volunteer
18 force; and

19 WHEREAS, a significant number of the five hundred thousand
20 service members that may be part of the drawdown reduction will
21 come home to New Mexico, and the reduction in federal defense
22 spending could have a significant impact on the benefits and
23 services available to veterans; and

24 WHEREAS, veterans face a number of unique issues and
25 suffer many physical and mental health injuries due to the

.194106.2

underscoring material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1 service they have provided to this country, including traumatic
2 brain injury, the signature injury of the current global war on
3 terror, and posttraumatic stress disorder, which is being
4 diagnosed in record numbers; and

5 WHEREAS, the veterans' services department should work in
6 conjunction with the United States department of veterans
7 affairs and department of defense to determine the best
8 strategies that will ensure that the veterans who have come
9 home, and those that will soon be home, are taken care of in a
10 manner in which they deserve and in gratitude for their service
11 and their sacrifice; and

12 WHEREAS, it is important to develop a strategic plan that
13 will address issues facing New Mexico veterans who have bravely
14 served this country and help to prepare the state to meet
15 veterans' needs now and in the future;

16 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
17 OF NEW MEXICO that the veterans' services department, in
18 conjunction with the United States department of veterans
19 affairs and department of defense, develop a draft strategic
20 plan that:

21 A. outlines what the department and experts on
22 veterans' issues nationwide see as growing issues for veterans;
23 and

24 B. reviews the state's capability to work with and
25 use current United States department of veterans affairs

.194106.2

underscoring material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1 policies and grant programs to meet the diverse needs of New
2 Mexico veterans; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the draft strategic plan
4 include an assessment of:

5 A. adequate cemetery space for veterans, including
6 the need in future decades for veteran burials based on current
7 United States department of veterans affairs proximity criteria
8 for appropriate veteran cemeteries;

9 B. veteran homes and facilities, including a
10 projection for long-term care due to issues such as traumatic
11 brain injury;

12 C. the current and projected number of veterans who
13 require various levels of care, including those with a need for
14 treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder;

15 D. access and obstacles to facilities that provide
16 treatment for veterans, particularly to veterans that reside in
17 rural areas of the state; and

18 E. the economic impact of retiree, pension and non-
19 pension veterans on the state; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the veterans' services
21 department report the draft strategic plan to the New Mexico
22 legislative council and the interim military and veterans'
23 affairs committee by November 1, 2013; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the speaker of the house of representatives, the

.194106.2

underscored material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1 president pro tempore of the senate and the secretary of
2 veterans' services.

3 - 5 -
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25