

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO STATE LIBRARY TO SUPPORT A NEEDS ASSESSMENT OF NEW MEXICO LIBRARIES AND TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST WITH A STATEWIDE CONFERENCE TO IDENTIFY POLICIES AND GOALS FOR IMPROVED LIBRARY SERVICES.

WHEREAS, with the dawn of the digital age, libraries in New Mexico and across the United States are no longer only repositories of books; and

WHEREAS, like the rest of American society, the library's role in the community has been transformed by the digital age; and

WHEREAS, libraries have become service centers for many New Mexicans who need free access to computer and internet services, including residents in rural and underserved populations in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, according to a study completed by the university of New Mexico's bureau of business and economic research, New Mexico's public libraries provided public access to one thousand four hundred thirty-three computers in fiscal year 2011, with each library branch averaging twelve public-access computers; and

WHEREAS, online access has become increasingly important for multiple purposes; and

WHEREAS, more businesses require applicants to apply for

a job online, while employment with the state of New Mexico is only conducted through online applications, and most job notices today are posted online exclusively; and

WHEREAS, the American library association reports that for the third consecutive year, services for job seekers remain the top-rated internet service that libraries provide; and

WHEREAS, libraries are being called upon to provide technology training, assistance with job applications and support for accessing electronic government and social services; and

WHEREAS, students at all levels require access to internet and computer-based resources for educational purposes, and more people are using computers and the internet to keep in touch with families and colleagues; and

WHEREAS, libraries provide educational programming and services for Native American and Spanish language users; and

WHEREAS, funding for libraries was cut in New Mexico and across the nation as a result of the economic recession, and New Mexico libraries are challenged to meet these real and increasing demands; and

WHEREAS, there are one hundred four public libraries, including branch libraries, in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, there are ninety-two school districts with eight hundred twenty-one school libraries in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, there are twenty-seven academic research, comprehensive, branch and community college libraries and nineteen tribal libraries in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for libraries and policymakers to assess the expanded role of libraries and to identify the necessary resources needed to properly fulfill this role; and

WHEREAS, there is a need for libraries and policymakers to develop policies to provide future services to New Mexico residents to achieve the goals of improved quality of life and the enhanced economic well-being of its residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico state library, which serves as the support agency for all libraries, be requested to support a needs assessment of New Mexico libraries; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico state library be requested to support and assist library organizations in New Mexico to convene a statewide library conference to develop and adopt policies to achieve goals for improved library services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the state librarian of the library division of the cultural affairs department and to the president of the New Mexico library association.