

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 11

2 **52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO STUDY WAYS IN
12 WHICH LEGISLATIVE INTERIM COMMITTEES COULD OPERATE MORE COST-
13 EFFECTIVELY AND EFFICIENTLY.

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15 WHEREAS, the number of legislative interim committees has
16 increased from eleven in 1979, including just five with ten or
17 more legislators as voting members, to more than two dozen in
18 2014, including eighteen with ten or more legislators as voting
19 members; and

20 WHEREAS, many legislative interim committees routinely
21 meet outside of Santa Fe during much of the interim in a
22 laudable effort to allow members to see and hear firsthand the
23 issues facing New Mexico and to ensure that New Mexicans who
24 cannot easily travel to Santa Fe have access to the legislative
25 branch of government; and

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1 WHEREAS, the large number and membership of interim
2 committees and their robust travel schedules have had the
3 unintended consequence of making it more difficult for many
4 legislators to effectively serve; and

5 WHEREAS, other legislatures have adopted interim committee
6 schedules that group various committee meetings at
7 approximately the same time in the same location to reduce
8 costs to the state and travel time for legislators, committee
9 staff, presenters and the public; and

10 WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislative council has authorized
11 several studies over the years to examine ways in which the
12 legislative process could be improved, and those studies have
13 resulted in several reforms, including opening conference
14 committee meetings to the public, expanding new member
15 orientation, restricting interim committee travel late in the
16 interim, allowing joint sponsorship of legislation, prohibiting
17 the introduction of identical interim committee and agency
18 legislation in both the house and senate, expanding pre-filing
19 of legislation, improving the legislative webcasts, expanding
20 public parking and allowing members to attend meetings of
21 interim committees of which they are not members; and

22 WHEREAS, based in part on the success of the previous
23 studies and recommended reforms, there is reason to believe
24 that a study of ways in which the operation of interim
25 committees could be made more cost-effective and efficient

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1 would be similarly successful;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
3 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be
4 requested to study ways in which interim committees could
5 operate more cost-effectively and efficiently; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
7 delivered to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative
8 council.

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