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SENATE MEMORIAL 1

**52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2016**

INTRODUCED BY

Michael Padilla

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT A TASK FORCE BE CONVENED TO STUDY AND RECOMMEND  
POLICY CHANGES TO EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES AND  
ASSISTANCE FOR GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN.

WHEREAS, more than thirty-three thousand children in New  
Mexico are living with a grandparent who is responsible for  
their well-being; and

WHEREAS, grandparents acting as primary caregivers for  
their grandchildren often face financial hardship due to the  
lack of resources and support services for grandparents raising  
grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, many grandparents, despite acting as primary  
caregivers for their grandchildren, lack the legal status that  
would allow them to apply for benefits that their grandchildren  
are eligible to receive; and

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1           WHEREAS, in response to the passage of Senate Joint  
2 Memorial 14 during the 2014 legislative session, the children,  
3 youth and families department published a study on the  
4 availability of resources to grandparents raising  
5 grandchildren; and

6           WHEREAS, the study reveals a dearth of public services and  
7 resources available to grandparents raising grandchildren and,  
8 in particular, to grandparents who lack legal custody of their  
9 grandchildren; and

10          WHEREAS, the financial resources available to foster-care  
11 providers are available only to grandparents who have been  
12 licensed by the protective services division of the children,  
13 youth and families department and who are caring for  
14 grandchildren involved with the child protective services  
15 system; and

16          WHEREAS, the children, youth and families department  
17 reports that the number of grandparents acting as kinship  
18 guardians for their grandchildren is very small compared to the  
19 total number of grandparents caring for their grandchildren;  
20 and

21          WHEREAS, a focused approach to policymaking that  
22 incorporates input from stakeholders, advocates, community  
23 leaders and members of the public will help to ensure that  
24 grandparents raising grandchildren have access to the tools and  
25 resources necessary to nurture and provide a stable environment

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1 for their grandchildren;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE  
3 OF NEW MEXICO that a task force be formed to include members  
4 who represent New Mexico voices for children, Pegasus legal  
5 services for children, the New Mexico coalition of educational  
6 leaders, court appointed special advocates, the New Mexico  
7 parent teacher association, parents reaching out, AARP, inc.,  
8 and Las Cumbres community services, inc.; one representative  
9 each from the human services department, the children, youth  
10 and families department, the children's court, the public  
11 education department, the aging and long-term services  
12 department and the office of the attorney general; and two  
13 members from the general public; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force study and  
15 recommend concrete policy changes that could be implemented to  
16 expand the availability of resources and assistance to  
17 grandparents raising grandchildren, including financial  
18 resources; legal services; food and housing assistance; and  
19 programs relating to medical care, child care, transportation  
20 and education; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the human services department,  
22 the children, youth and families department and the aging and  
23 long-term services department be requested to coordinate and  
24 provide staff support to the task force; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its

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1 findings and recommendations to the legislative health and  
2 human services committee and the legislative finance committee  
3 no later than November 2016; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
5 transmitted to the human services department, the children,  
6 youth and families department and the aging and long-term  
7 services department.

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