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A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 23, 2017 "CORRECTIONAL OFFICER AND
DETENTION OFFICER DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, correctional officers and detention officers
throughout New Mexico have one of the most difficult and
stressful jobs; and

WHEREAS, correctional officers and detention officers
are tasked with the operation of correctional and detention
facilities and are responsible for the care and custody of
inmates, as well as protecting the public from incarcerated
individuals; and

WHEREAS, many of the correctional and detention
facilities have unsafe conditions, with some facilities
falling below the level of adequate funding; and

WHEREAS, lack of adequate funding has led to a reduction
in critical training, a lack of vitally needed equipment for
officers and unsafe staffing levels, resulting in an increase
in assaults by inmates on officers; and

WHEREAS, because of high vacancy rates, with some
facilities above twenty percent officer vacancy, correctional
and detention officers are often forced to work mandatory
sixty- to seventy-hour work weeks, which in turn has led to
retention and recruitment issues and an even more hazardous
work environment for the officers and support staff; and

1 WHEREAS, forced mandatory overtime in such a stressful
2 environment has a direct correlation to mental and physical
3 fatigue, lack of focus, decreased efficiency and unsteady
4 judgment of correctional and detention officers; and

5 WHEREAS, these conditions cause officers to be less
6 effective on the job when dealing with incidents with
7 inmates; and

8 WHEREAS, the lack of funding has a negative impact on
9 the day-to-day mission of the officers; and

10 WHEREAS, there is also serious concern for facilities
11 that face millions of dollars in deferred maintenance; and

12 WHEREAS, the conditions in many of the correctional and
13 detention facilities across the state are reminiscent of the
14 conditions that led to the 1980 prison riot at the
15 penitentiary of New Mexico and incidents in other New Mexico
16 facilities; and

17 WHEREAS, current conditions demand immediate recognition
18 of the crisis and proposed solutions;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 23, 2017 be declared
21 "Correctional Officer and Detention Officer Day" in the
22 senate; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the difficult situations
24 correctional officers and detention officers face every day
25 be recognized; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor, the corrections department and local governments be requested to work with the legislature to address the problem of underfunding and unsafe staffing levels at correctional and detention facilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor and the secretary of corrections.
