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SENATE MEMORIAL 38

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017

INTRODUCED BY

Mimi Stewart

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AND THE NEW MEXICO COALITION OF SEXUAL ASSAULT PROGRAMS TO
CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO CREATE A STATEWIDE HEALTH PLAN DESIGNED
TO REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE STRANGULATION
AND TO ADDRESS THE LONG-TERM HEALTH IMPLICATIONS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico has the second-highest domestic
violence rate in the United States, and sixty-eight percent of
all domestic violence victims will experience near-fatal
strangulation as a consequence of domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, often, even in fatal cases, there is no external
evidence of injury from strangulation; and

WHEREAS, because of underlying brain damage due to the
lack of oxygen during the strangulation assault, victims may
have serious internal injuries or die days or even weeks later;

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1 and

2 WHEREAS, anoxic brain injury from strangulation may occur
3 within seconds and death within minutes; and

4 WHEREAS, law enforcement agencies may underestimate the
5 significance of strangulation and its potential lethality and
6 fail to make appropriate medical referrals; and

7 WHEREAS, some first responders and emergency room
8 personnel lack training to identify the signs and symptoms of
9 strangulation and often focus on visible, obvious injuries,
10 such as stab wounds or contusions; and

11 WHEREAS, a comprehensive, multi-pronged approach is needed
12 from law enforcement, first responders and the medical
13 community to effectively address strangulation, reduce
14 children's exposure to violence and end the cycle of violence;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, the injury prevention program of the department
17 of health is charged with the promotion of programs and
18 policies focusing on the prevention of sexual violence and
19 intimate partner violence;

20 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
21 OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico coalition against domestic
22 violence and the New Mexico coalition of sexual assault
23 programs be requested to convene a task force to create a
24 statewide health plan to reduce the incidence of interpersonal
25 violence strangulation and to address its long-term health

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1 implications; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the secretary of health be
3 requested to appoint a member of the epidemiology and response
4 division of the department of health to the task force; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
6 include participation from the New Mexico coalition against
7 domestic violence, the New Mexico coalition of sexual assault
8 programs, the coalition to stop violence against native women,
9 the crime victims reparation commission, the Santa Fe
10 coordinated community response council, the university of New
11 Mexico health sciences center, the Indian health service and a
12 medical first responder agency; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force also be
14 requested to include participation from a sexual assault nurse
15 examiner, a law enforcement officer with expertise in domestic
16 violence, a medical professional with expertise in the area of
17 anoxic brain injury caused by strangulation and other
18 appropriate entities; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force present its
20 recommendations to the legislative health and human services
21 committee and the legislative finance committee by November 30,
22 2017; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the chair of the legislative finance committee,
25 the chair of the legislative health and human services

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1 committee, the secretary of health, the executive director of
2 the New Mexico coalition against domestic violence and the
3 executive director of the New Mexico coalition of sexual
4 assault programs.

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