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SENATE MEMORIAL 6

**55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022**

INTRODUCED BY

Steven P. Neville and Gerald Ortiz y Pino

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES TO CONVENE A  
TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE COSTS, BENEFITS AND FEASIBILITY OF  
TRANSITIONING DETENTION FACILITIES FROM INDIVIDUAL COUNTY  
OPERATIONS TO A UNIFIED JAIL AND PRISON SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, there are twenty-seven county-operated adult  
detention facilities in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the operational capacity of county-operated adult  
detention facilities ranges from ten detainees and inmates to  
two thousand three hundred thirty-six detainees and inmates;  
and

WHEREAS, the average daily population of the twenty-seven  
county-operated adult detention facilities ranges from two to  
one thousand one hundred sixty detainees and inmates; and

WHEREAS, detention facilities are complex operations that

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1 require a high level of expertise and adequate numbers of well-  
2 trained staff to function properly; and

3 WHEREAS, substantial time and resources are spent by  
4 various governmental entities billing each other for the costs  
5 of incarceration and addressing disputes regarding who is  
6 responsible for paying those costs; and

7 WHEREAS, detainees and inmates are poorly served by a  
8 system that does not have a way to effectively share medical  
9 and behavioral health information; and

10 WHEREAS, the services and programming available in county  
11 detention facilities vary greatly; and

12 WHEREAS, significant taxpayer dollars are wasted by having  
13 twenty-seven independent facilities, each requiring  
14 comprehensive medical and mental health services regardless of  
15 size or capacity; and

16 WHEREAS, Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode  
17 Island and Vermont all have unified jail and prison systems,  
18 and West Virginia has a single state authority that oversees  
19 regional facilities; and

20 WHEREAS, New Mexico could benefit from the efficiencies  
21 created by a unified system where records could be shared and  
22 resources could be saved through economies of scale; and

23 WHEREAS, it is inefficient and wasteful to have numerous  
24 independent governmental entities operating detention  
25 facilities within the state;

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