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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 96

45TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2002

INTRODUCED BY

James G. Taylor

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE AND THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION TO REVIEW THE COMPENSATION SYSTEM AND HIRING PRACTICES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION EMPLOYEES TO DISCERN WHETHER THERE IS A NEED FOR LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT.

WHEREAS, it is recognized nationally that public institutions of higher education in the United States are undergoing great changes to better prepare a literate and skilled citizenry that is capable of competing successfully in the economic and political arenas of a global community and that can sustain our democratic American society through full participation in community and civic life; and

WHEREAS, in 2001, the commission on higher education recognized that higher education faculty and staff salaries at peer institutions in other states were rising faster than

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1 those in New Mexico; and

2 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico and New Mexico
3 state university are two public institutions of higher
4 education where faculty and staff salaries have failed to keep
5 pace with peer institutions since 1997; and

6 WHEREAS, investment in faculty and staff salaries would
7 benefit New Mexico's economic development because competitive
8 pay attracts quality faculty and staff that, in turn, attract
9 large sums of research money; and

10 WHEREAS, low faculty and staff salaries are contributing
11 to low morale and high faculty and staff turnover, impacting
12 the quality of higher education in New Mexico; and

13 WHEREAS, New Mexico's institutions of higher education,
14 specifically the university of New Mexico, eastern New Mexico
15 university and New Mexico state university, distribute salary
16 increases provided by the legislature according to dubious
17 merit pay plans instead of as across-the-board competitive pay
18 raises, a practice that also contributes to low morale and
19 high employee turnover and negatively impacts the delivery of
20 quality higher education; and

21 WHEREAS, New Mexico's institutions of higher education
22 are converting full-time faculty and staff vacancies to part-
23 time positions at an alarming rate, another practice that
24 contributes to low morale and high employee turnover and
25 negatively impacts the delivery of quality higher education;

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1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
2 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative education study
3 committee and the commission on higher education be requested
4 to review the compensation system and hiring practices for
5 higher education employees to discern whether there is a need
6 for legislative oversight; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
8 study committee and the commission on higher education be
9 requested to review the effectiveness of merit pay versus
10 across-the-board salary raises as a means of competing with
11 peer institutions for quality higher education employees; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
13 study committee and the commission on higher education be
14 requested to review the impact of converting full-time
15 vacancies to part-time positions on the quality of higher
16 education in New Mexico; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education
18 study committee and the commission on higher education be
19 requested to review the need for legislative oversight of New
20 Mexico's institutions of higher education and to provide
21 recommendations to the full legislature prior to the beginning
22 of the first session of the forty-sixth legislative session;
23 and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
25 transmitted to the chair of the legislative education study

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1 committee and the executive director of the commission on
2 higher education.

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