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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 88
46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

INTRODUCED BY
Irvin Harrison

A JOINT MEMORIAL
REQUESTING THAT THE INTERIM LEGISLATIVE INDIAN AFFAIRS
COMMITTEE STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF USING TRIBAL REVENUE SHARING
FOR TRIBAL COLLEGE STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS.

WHEREAS, tribal colleges were created during the last
thirty years in response to the higher education needs of
Native Americans and generally serve geographically isolated
populations that have no other means of accessing education
beyond the high school level; and

WHEREAS, tribal colleges have become increasingly
essential in providing educational opportunities to Native
American students because they combine personal attention and
cultural relevance in a way that encourages Native Americans,
especially those living on reservations, to overcome barriers
to higher education; and

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1 WHEREAS, cultural and language differences often present
2 difficulties to Native American students, and the geographic
3 isolation of most reservations often inhibits student access to
4 mainstream colleges; and

5 WHEREAS, despite relatively low family income levels,
6 tribal college students tend to have less access to the range
7 of financial aid available to other students; for example,
8 state and institutional sources together account for twenty-
9 five percent of aid provided to all United States college
10 students but less than one percent of aid provided to tribal
11 college students; and

12 WHEREAS, tribal colleges generally do not participate in
13 the campus-based Perkins loan program, and very few tribal
14 college students borrow Stafford loans; and

15 WHEREAS, approximately eight percent of tribal college
16 students receive supplemental educational opportunity grants
17 with an average award of four hundred eleven dollars (\$411),
18 and approximately three percent of tribal college students
19 receive an average of eight hundred fifty-one dollars (\$851) in
20 federal work-study funds, these average awards being lower than
21 those of mainstream college students due to grandfather clauses
22 in federal legislation that favor older institutions; and

23 WHEREAS, although tribal colleges depend on the funds
24 distributed through the federal Tribally Controlled College or
25 University Assistance Act of 1978, appropriations are now less

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1 than half of the authorized amount because enrollment growth
2 has outpaced the small increases in congressional
3 appropriations and because the number of eligible tribal
4 colleges has grown; and

5 WHEREAS, to make up for the shortfall in revenue, most
6 tribal colleges charge tuition that is high given the poverty
7 levels of the communities they serve;

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
9 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the interim legislative Indian affairs
10 committee study the financial resources available to tribal
11 college students, including the feasibility of using tribal
12 revenue sharing for scholarships for tribal college students;
13 and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the interim legislative Indian affairs committee
16 and the New Mexico office of Indian affairs.