

1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 URGING CONGRESS TO SUPPORT NAVAJO NATION CRIMINAL JUSTICE
3 CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS FOR ADULTS AND JUVENILES TO PROVIDE
4 ADEQUATE SPACES, DECENT FACILITIES AND SPACE FOR PROGRAMMING
5 FOR NATIVE AMERICAN INMATES.

6
7 WHEREAS, inmates on the Navajo Nation are warehoused in
8 fifty-four-year-old facilities that do not meet contemporary
9 standards for square footage, lighting, exercise or
10 programming; and

11 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation discovered, after building
12 the prisons in 1951, that the federal government would not
13 aid in improving or maintaining facilities not built with
14 federal dollars; and

15 WHEREAS, the treaty of 1868 between the United States
16 and the Navajo Nation explicitly ensured safety for the
17 Navajo people, an assurance further implied by the federal
18 Snyder Act; and

19 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation averages only one law
20 enforcement officer for every four thousand persons, compared
21 to four officers per one thousand, on average, throughout the
22 rest of the country; and

23 WHEREAS, lawlessness and disrespect result from
24 awareness on the part of offenders that there is too little
25 money for enforcement and limited space for incarceration;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, detention facilities in Crownpoint, Shiprock
3 and Ramah will soon close because of dilapidation,
4 overcrowding and hazardous conditions; and

5 WHEREAS, because Shiprock and Crownpoint have no
6 juvenile facilities, young people arrested there are
7 transported to Tohatchi, approximately sixty-five miles away,
8 or to the Chinle youth corrections facility, nearly one
9 hundred fifty miles away; and

10 WHEREAS, Navajo Nation facilities in New Mexico serve
11 over ten thousand of the approximately thirty-eight thousand
12 adult prisoners per year incarcerated on the Navajo Nation;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, crime is on the rise on the Navajo Nation even
15 though the violent crime rate is declining nationwide; and

16 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation has tried unsuccessfully,
17 since 2000, to get federal funding for improved corrections
18 facilities for Native American adults and youth;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the United States congress be
21 encouraged to provide thirty-five million seven hundred
22 thousand dollars (\$35,700,000) for new facilities at
23 Shiprock, Crownpoint and Ramah; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that New Mexico's congressional
25 delegation be made aware of the vital importance of the

1 improvement of corrections facilities and programs on the
2 Navajo Nation; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 sent to the members of the congressional delegation and to
5 the Navajo Nation. _____

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