

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CREATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC EDUCATION PLAN TO ELIMINATE THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP AND INCREASE THE GRADUATION RATES OF HISPANIC, NATIVE AMERICAN AND AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS.

WHEREAS, New Mexicans honor their heritage, cultures and languages as evidenced in the Hispanic Education Act, the Indian Education Act and the Bilingual Multicultural Education Act; and

WHEREAS, a free, public and sufficient education is guaranteed for all children of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, seventy percent of New Mexico's public school student population consists of Hispanic, Native American and African American children, who are underachieving academically; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2012 edition of "Quality Counts", the annual report card published by *Education Week*, New Mexico is rated fiftieth on its "Chance-for-Success Index", which grades the nation and states on thirteen indicators, capturing the critical role that education plays as a person moves from childhood through the K-12 system, and into college and the work force; and

WHEREAS, the same report ranks New Mexico as forty-seventh, with a grade of D minus, in the "K-12 Achievement

Index", which evaluates state educational performance on eighteen individual indicators that measure current achievement, improvements over time and poverty-based disparities or gaps; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic, Native American and African American students are dropping out of high school or post-secondary education in numbers that severely threaten the social and economic welfare of the state; and

WHEREAS, these students represent a significant portion of New Mexico's future work force; and

WHEREAS, technological innovations continue to create jobs for a skilled work force, and New Mexico's students must be prepared for the jobs of the future; and

WHEREAS, a well-educated work force and citizenry is widely viewed as the basis for economic stability and competitiveness; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico's children of all colors are its treasure; and

WHEREAS, the state must develop and support talented and dedicated educators who are the key to delivering a high-quality education to all students;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to convene a working group to develop a comprehensive strategic education plan to eliminate

the achievement gap and increase the graduation rates of Hispanic, Native American and African American students in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to include as members of the working group representatives of the following: legislators; parents; the public education department; the higher education department, state public and private schools and universities; organizations and advocacy groups that focus on educational opportunities and progress for Hispanic, Native American and African American students; organizations representing educators; and business and community development organizations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative education study committee and the legislative finance committee be requested to assist in staffing the working group; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the New Mexico legislative council, the public education department, the higher education department, the legislative education study committee and the legislative finance committee.