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HOUSE MEMORIAL 113

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

Deborah A. Armstrong

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A TASK
FORCE TO EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF ONLINE STUDY COURSES, THE
STATE'S ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND CORRESPONDING REGULATIONS
FOR LICENSURE IN THE STATE AS A PSYCHOLOGIST.

WHEREAS, the demand for behavioral health care services is
increasing, and the state must continuously monitor the
adequacy of the behavioral health care work force and
resources; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a mostly rural state that has some
of the nation's highest rates of suicide and alcohol and drug
use; and

WHEREAS, the publicly funded behavioral health system is a
vital safety net for people with serious mental illnesses such
as depression, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia; and

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1 WHEREAS, behavioral health care services are not always
2 sufficient to meet the demand in many regions of the state; and

3 WHEREAS, in many rural areas, the range of behavioral
4 health care services is insufficient to meet the demand for
5 services; and

6 WHEREAS, where some mental health services do exist,
7 providers qualified to effectively treat complex diagnoses,
8 including counselors, social workers, psychologists and
9 psychiatrists with expertise in early childhood mental health,
10 are at times unavailable; and

11 WHEREAS, current behavioral health professional
12 requirements provide restrictions on an applicant's eligibility
13 to apply for licensure as a psychologist in the state; and

14 WHEREAS, the state's psychologist licensing procedures
15 require applicants to have a doctoral degree from a program
16 accredited by the American psychological association, and this
17 organization does not currently allow accreditation of programs
18 that are substantially online; and

19 WHEREAS, the higher education department is statutorily
20 charged with the periodic study of higher education academic
21 program demands, institutional competencies and infrastructure
22 and state work force demands and therefore has the expertise to
23 carry out the requested study;

24 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
25 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the higher

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1 education department be requested to convene a task force that
2 includes representatives of the regulation and licensing
3 department, the behavioral health services division of the
4 human services department, the New Mexico association of school
5 psychologists, the New Mexico psychological association, the
6 New Mexico state board of psychologist examiners and others to
7 evaluate the quality of online study courses, the state's
8 licensing procedures, licensure eligibility requirements and
9 corresponding regulations for psychologists; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health be
11 requested to hold meetings with students and representatives of
12 nontraditional doctoral programs that are excluded from
13 eligibility on the basis of their use of online methods of
14 education; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any recommended changes to the
16 state's licensing procedures, licensure eligibility
17 requirements or corresponding regulations be made to the
18 appropriate interim committee no later than December 1, 2015;
19 and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
21 transmitted to the secretary of higher education, the
22 superintendent of regulation and licensing, the director of the
23 behavioral health services division of the human services
24 department, the president of the New Mexico association of
25 school psychologists, the executive director of the New Mexico

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1 psychological association and the chair of the New Mexico state
2 board of psychologist examiners.

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