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SENATE MEMORIAL 97

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

ENCOURAGING A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO ADDRESS ISSUES CAUSING
AND STEMMING FROM PANHANDLING NEAR LAS VEGAS BUSINESSES.

WHEREAS, the New Mexico behavioral health institute at Las Vegas, New Mexico, is the only publicly funded psychiatric hospital in New Mexico and serves adults from throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico behavioral health institute provides adult psychiatric services to approximately one thousand patients per year; and

WHEREAS, planning for discharge and after-care of each patient begins at the time of admission but, at times, community resources may not exist in the patient's community of origin; and

WHEREAS, hundreds of patients without a safety net are

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1 discharged into the Las Vegas area every year and often become
2 housed in unregulated boarding homes; and

3 WHEREAS, some of these discharged patients, who are
4 without a job or source of income, turn to soliciting funds
5 near local businesses; and

6 WHEREAS, this practice can be disruptive to these
7 businesses; and

8 WHEREAS, the city of Las Vegas does not have an ordinance
9 prohibiting panhandling; and

10 WHEREAS, other municipalities, such as Albuquerque and
11 Santa Fe, have experienced legal issues pertaining to
12 enforcement of their panhandling ordinances; and

13 WHEREAS, issues addressing the root causes of panhandling
14 and the effects of panhandling on businesses are ongoing and
15 should be identified and addressed; and

16 WHEREAS, the boarding homes that house many panhandlers
17 might serve as a helpful resource to individuals in need and be
18 best suited to work with individuals who may be unaware of, or
19 not have access to, alternatives to panhandling; and

20 WHEREAS, a dialogue among the New Mexico behavioral health
21 institute, boarding home owners and managers, local business
22 owners, the city of Las Vegas, San Miguel county and Las Vegas
23 residents who panhandle would be helpful in searching for
24 solutions to mitigate the need for panhandling and to identify
25 other alternatives; and

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