

1 SENATE MEMORIAL 115

2 **54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 John Pinto

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10 A MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THAT THE UNITED STATES AND THE NAVAJO NATION TAKE
12 PROACTIVE STEPS TO PROTECT CHILDREN WHO ARE VICTIMS OF VIOLENT
13 CRIME AND TO HOLD THE PERPETRATORS ACCOUNTABLE.

14
15 WHEREAS, sexual violence against children is horrendous
16 and all too common in the Navajo Nation; and

17 WHEREAS, the Navajo Nation council has created the
18 Naabik'íyáti' sexual assault prevention subcommittee to address
19 this issue; and

20 WHEREAS, the subcommittee found that Navajo police receive
21 an average of six reports of rape per week; and

22 WHEREAS, twenty-two percent of Navajo children receiving
23 health services were seen for sexual abuse or assault; and

24 WHEREAS, it is estimated that one in four Navajo children
25 have experienced some form of sexual abuse; and

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1 WHEREAS, many of these crimes go uninvestigated, and when
2 they are investigated, they are often referred to federal
3 courts for prosecution, where conviction rates are extremely
4 low; and

5 WHEREAS, the trauma from abuse lives on in the victims of
6 these terrible crimes; and

7 WHEREAS, adverse childhood experiences have been shown to
8 have long-lasting effects in many aspects of a person's life;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, the cost of those effects is not only felt by the
11 victims but also by their families and entire communities; and

12 WHEREAS, there are also economic costs that can be
13 attributed to those crimes; and

14 WHEREAS, these crimes and the lack of accountability for
15 them contribute to a public health and safety epidemic in the
16 Navajo Nation; and

17 WHEREAS, as these crimes persist, one-fourth of Navajo
18 youth consider suicide; and

19 WHEREAS, there are few resources on the Navajo Nation that
20 are dedicated to addressing sexual violence against children;
21 and

22 WHEREAS, the frequency of these crimes and the low
23 conviction rates create ongoing trauma for the victims, who
24 often continue to live in the same communities as the
25 perpetrators; and

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