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HOUSE MEMORIAL 11

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2022

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES TO CONVENE A
TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE COSTS, BENEFITS AND FEASIBILITY OF
TRANSITIONING DETENTION FACILITIES FROM INDIVIDUAL COUNTY
OPERATIONS TO A UNIFIED JAIL AND PRISON SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, there are twenty-seven county-operated adult
detention facilities in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the operational capacity of county-operated adult
detention facilities ranges from ten detainees and inmates to
two thousand three hundred thirty-six detainees and inmates;
and

WHEREAS, the average daily population of the twenty-seven
county-operated adult detention facilities ranges from two to
one thousand one hundred sixty detainees and inmates; and

WHEREAS, detention facilities are complex operations that

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1 require a high level of expertise and adequate numbers of well-
2 trained staff to function properly; and

3 WHEREAS, substantial time and resources are spent by
4 various governmental entities billing each other for the costs
5 of incarceration and addressing disputes regarding who is
6 responsible for paying those costs; and

7 WHEREAS, detainees and inmates are poorly served by a
8 system that does not have a way to effectively share medical
9 and behavioral health information; and

10 WHEREAS, the services and programming available in county
11 detention facilities vary greatly; and

12 WHEREAS, significant taxpayer dollars are wasted by having
13 twenty-seven independent facilities, each requiring
14 comprehensive medical and mental health services regardless of
15 size or capacity; and

16 WHEREAS, Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Rhode
17 Island and Vermont all have unified jail and prison systems,
18 and West Virginia has a single state authority that oversees
19 regional facilities; and

20 WHEREAS, New Mexico could benefit from the efficiencies
21 created by a unified system where records could be shared and
22 resources could be saved through economies of scale; and

23 WHEREAS, it is inefficient and wasteful to have numerous
24 independent governmental entities operating detention
25 facilities within the state;

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1 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
2 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico
3 association of counties be requested to convene a task force of
4 stakeholders to study the costs, benefits and feasibility of
5 transitioning the state to a unified jail and prison system;
6 and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
8 representatives from the New Mexico association of counties,
9 the corrections department and the administrative office of the
10 courts; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its
12 findings to the appropriate interim legislative committee by
13 December 1, 2022; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the executive director of the New Mexico
16 association of counties, the director of the administrative
17 office of the courts and the secretary of corrections.