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SENATE MEMORIAL 36

44TH LEGISLATURE – STATE OF NEW MEXICO – FIRST SESSION, 1999

INTRODUCED BY

Leonard Tsoise

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT CONGRESS RESTORE AND FULLY FUND THE COMMUNITY HEALTH REPRESENTATIVE PROGRAM OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE.

WHEREAS, the community health representative program is the largest community-based work force within the Indian health service with more than one thousand five hundred community health representatives in more than two hundred fifty tribes in more than four hundred rural communities; and

WHEREAS, the community health representative program marks the first time in history that the tribes have managed their own health programs, setting their own priorities through contractual arrangements with the Indian health service; and

WHEREAS, the community health representative program is a prime example of Indian self-determination, embodying all the precepts and managerial goals of the principle of self-determination; and

WHEREAS, the goal of the community health representative program is to provide

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1 health services necessary to elevate the health of American Indians and native Alaskans to
2 the highest possible level and to maximize the participation of tribes in planning and
3 managing health services; and

4 WHEREAS, the focus of the program is the active involvement of community
5 members in preventive medicine and the strengthening of tribal management and operation
6 of health programs; and

7 WHEREAS, health care para-professionals help make the program more accessible
8 and comprehensive to Indian tribal members and native Alaskans; and

9 WHEREAS, the community health representative program has been an important
10 component in the nineteen percent rise of the average life expectancy since 1955, to 69.1
11 years for males and 77.5 years for females; and

12 WHEREAS, mortality rates among Indians with tuberculosis has decreased by ninety-
13 six percent while maternal mortality has decreased by ninety-one percent and the infant
14 mortality rate has decreased by eighty-five percent; and

15 WHEREAS, the community health representative program budget has been reduced
16 by five million dollars (\$5,000,000) in fiscal year 2000;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO
18 that the United States congress be requested to reinstate the full funding for the
19 community health representative program of the Indian health service; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the New
21 Mexico congressional delegation.