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HOUSE MEMORIAL 43

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012

INTRODUCED BY

Joseph Cervantes

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH AT AN
INSTITUTION OF HIGHER LEARNING IN NEW MEXICO FOR TRADITIONAL
AND ONLINE PUBLIC HEALTH INSTRUCTION THROUGHOUT THE STATE AND
REQUESTING THAT IT REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE LEGISLATIVE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE AND TO THE LEGISLATIVE
FINANCE COMMITTEE BY NOVEMBER 1, 2012.

WHEREAS, public health is the science of protecting and
improving the health of communities through education,
promotion of healthy lifestyles and research for disease and
injury prevention; and

WHEREAS, public health professionals analyze the effects
of genetics, personal choice and the environment on health in
order to develop programs to protect the health of families and

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1 communities; and

2 WHEREAS, the field of public health is highly varied and
3 encompasses many academic disciplines such as behavioral
4 science and health education, biostatistics, environmental
5 health, epidemiology, nutrition and maternal and child health,
6 as well as public health policy; and

7 WHEREAS, there are forty-seven accredited schools of
8 public health in the United States, with only seven schools of
9 public health located west of the Mississippi river, and New
10 Mexico is not among them; and

11 WHEREAS, the accredited public health programs at New
12 Mexico state university and the university of New Mexico are
13 not offered through a school of public health; and

14 WHEREAS, according to the council on education for public
15 health, in order for a school of public health to be
16 accredited, it must offer a master's of public health degree in
17 five areas of concentration: biostatistics, epidemiology,
18 health policy and management, social and behavioral health and
19 environmental health. In addition, it must offer a doctoral
20 program in three of these practice areas, and there are
21 specific requirements for the number and qualifications of the
22 faculty; and

23 WHEREAS, schools of public health command prestige by
24 attracting talented faculty and top students, create employment
25 opportunities and make a substantial impact on regional public

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1 health; and

2 WHEREAS, schools of public health have access to federal
3 funds for which other institutions are not eligible, and they
4 are more competitive in efforts to secure outside funding from
5 federal agencies such as the national institutes of health, the
6 centers for disease control and prevention and the department
7 of health and human services; and

8 WHEREAS, increased funding translates into increased
9 public health research, development of effective interventions
10 to address public health problems, health disparity reduction,
11 improvement in health indicators and more jobs for New Mexico
12 residents;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
14 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the higher
15 education department be requested to study the feasibility of
16 establishing a school of public health at an institution of
17 higher learning in New Mexico; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as a part of its feasibility
19 study, the higher education department be requested to consider
20 both traditional and online educational formats and programs
21 through a school of public health at an institution of higher
22 learning to provide students in isolated or rural areas of the
23 state with access to a full spectrum of public health
24 education; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the higher education

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1 department be requested to report the findings of its school of
2 public health feasibility study to the legislative health and
3 human services committee and to the legislative finance
4 committee by November 1, 2012; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copies of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the higher education department, the legislative
7 health and human services committee and the legislative finance
8 committee.