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SENATE MEMORIAL 37

52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015

INTRODUCED BY

Nancy Rodriguez

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE VALUE, RESPECT AND DIGNITY OF INDIVIDUALS WHO
HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR TO
PROCLAIM THE MONTH OF MARCH 2015 AS "DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
AWARENESS MONTH".

WHEREAS, developmental disability is a natural part of
human experience, affecting more than twenty thousand New
Mexican children and adults and millions of Americans; and

WHEREAS, New Mexicans with and without disabilities work
together, play together, worship together, learn together and
grow together; and

WHEREAS, every person, regardless of ability, has valuable
strengths, an infinite capacity to learn and the potential to
make important contributions to their local communities; and

WHEREAS, all individuals with developmental disabilities

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1 can be productive, contributing members of their communities;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, individuals with developmental disabilities in
4 New Mexico share with the state's other residents the right to
5 live life as they choose in their education, job, recreation
6 and home decisions; and

7 WHEREAS, the federal Developmental Disabilities Assistance
8 and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 seeks to ensure that individuals
9 with developmental disabilities are able to participate fully
10 in their communities through integration and inclusion in the
11 economic, political, social, cultural, religious and
12 educational sectors of society; and

13 WHEREAS, the federal act seeks to ensure that individuals
14 with developmental disabilities and their families participate
15 in the design of, and have access to, culturally competent
16 services and assistance and opportunities that promote
17 independence, productivity, integration and inclusion in the
18 community; and

19 WHEREAS, the full inclusion of individuals with
20 developmental disabilities and their families into their
21 communities involves engaging individuals in making life
22 choices, partnering with communities to build resources and
23 improving systems of care; and

24 WHEREAS, behaviors and attitudes of all citizens should
25 reflect respect in any interaction with individuals with

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1 developmental disabilities, whether in public or in private
2 settings; and

3 WHEREAS, language is a reflection of how people see each
4 other, and it can be used to build up or tear down a person's
5 self-esteem; and

6 WHEREAS, responsible communicators carefully choose
7 language that reflects the dignity of people with developmental
8 disabilities, opting for words that place the person, rather
9 than the disability, first; and

10 WHEREAS, all opportunities to treat adults and children
11 with developmental disabilities with respect should be pursued
12 to promote positive perceptions of all people in all walks of
13 life; and

14 WHEREAS, "Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month" is
15 an appropriate time to recognize New Mexico's public policy
16 accomplishments concerning persons with developmental
17 disabilities and also to identify the improvements to the
18 public policy that would fully include all of New Mexico's
19 residents with developmental disabilities; and

20 WHEREAS, celebrating the abilities and contributions of
21 individuals with developmental disabilities can only serve to
22 enrich the communities of New Mexico and to enhance diversity;

23 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
24 OF NEW MEXICO that the governor be requested to proclaim the
25 month of March 2015 as "Developmental Disabilities Awareness

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1 Month"; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that residents be urged to take
3 meaningful steps to recognize the value and respect the dignity
4 of individuals with developmental disabilities; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this respect and value be
6 reflected in personal interactions with individuals with
7 developmental disabilities; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all public officials be
9 encouraged to identify and eradicate incidents of harsh
10 labeling in their official capacities; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
12 transmitted to the governor, all cabinet secretaries and to the
13 university of New Mexico center for development and disability.