

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 41

2 **49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2010**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
12 FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION AND THE FIRE MARSHAL DIVISION OF THE
13 PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION TO STUDY POTENTIAL REVENUE SOURCES
14 TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY FIRE DEPARTMENTS AS THEY CONTINUE TO
15 PROVIDE PROPERTY- AND LIFE-SAVING SERVICES AND TO HELP WITH THE
16 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS.

17
18 WHEREAS, New Mexico is dependent on volunteer firefighters
19 to operate fire departments in counties throughout the state;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, eighty-five percent of New Mexico firefighters
22 are volunteers; and

23 WHEREAS, over eighty-five percent of New Mexico
24 communities depend entirely or partially on volunteer
25 firefighters; and

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1 WHEREAS, the national average age of volunteer
2 firefighters is fifty-seven years; and

3 WHEREAS, as volunteer firefighters age, they are not being
4 replaced as readily by younger or new firefighters; and

5 WHEREAS, most of New Mexico's local governments cannot
6 afford to replace volunteer firefighters with career
7 firefighters; and

8 WHEREAS, most of those same local governments are
9 experiencing more difficulty in recruiting and retaining
10 volunteer firefighters; and

11 WHEREAS, the lack of adequate numbers of volunteer
12 firefighters may put firefighters at greater risk of injury or
13 death; and

14 WHEREAS, the shortage of volunteer firefighters may also
15 be detrimental to the community fire protection rating and,
16 thus, potentially decrease local governments' share of the fire
17 protection fund; and

18 WHEREAS, the shortage also has the potential to increase
19 the cost of insurance coverage for individuals, businesses and
20 governments;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
22 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the local government division of the
23 department of finance and administration and the fire marshal
24 division of the public regulation commission study potential
25 revenue sources to support community fire departments so that

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1 they may continue to provide property- and life-saving
2 services; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study also look at ways
4 for local governments to recruit and retain volunteer
5 firefighters; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the divisions make periodic
7 reports to appropriate interim committees and a final report to
8 the governor and the legislature by October 31, 2010; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
10 transmitted to the director of the local government division,
11 the secretary of finance and administration, the state fire
12 marshal and the chair of the public regulation commission.

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