

## **HB 89 // Tribal Educational Resource Projects (Sponsor: Rep. Lente)**

### **Strengthening community-based education infrastructure**

Tribal communities offer an abundance of educational opportunities that help Native students learn and thrive. Yet the state has not sufficiently invested in tribal education facilities, despite the *Yazzie/Martinez* court order. Tribal libraries are crumbling and struggling to meet the growing demand.

**HB 89** invests in critical education infrastructure to support Native students' access to education. It will enable each of New Mexico's Nations, Tribes and Pueblos to plan, design, construct and equip libraries and education centers that serve Native students.

This will increase Indigenous education sovereignty, recognizing that tribal communities have a right to shape their children's education. Native students' benefit from enriched learning in their own communities, embedded in their culture, using the language of their ancestors.

The library in the Pueblo of Acoma, the Acoma Learning Center, is housed in a triple-wide modular building intended for temporary use. Its popular programs include after-school tutoring, summer reading, language immersion and an agricultural class. Detailed blueprints for a new construction are in place, but there is no funding. HB 89 allocates \$4.5 million.

**Tribal libraries and education resource centers have been a lifeline for Native students**, who struggle to access school-based services due to geographic, cultural, and now public health barriers.

**HB 89** proposes specific capital investments that will yield substantial returns for Native students:

- New construction, expansion or renovation of tribal libraries and other education facilities, as determined by criteria established by Tribes and Pueblos.
- Investments in Indigenous curriculum and materials development centers, community-based early childhood centers, and a college and career readiness center.

Appropriation: \$89.36 million for capital projects

**"Tribal Libraries are at the heart of supporting our people, young and old, through our community-based education programs that strike a balance in the transfer of essential knowledge, Indigenous and Western. They are not a luxury but an absolute necessity."**

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