

HOUSE MEMORIAL 4

57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2026

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE TO STUDY AND
REPORT ON OPTIONS TO EXPAND HEALTH INSURANCE ACCESS FOR ALL
PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION EDUCATORS AND GRADUATE STUDENT
EMPLOYEES.

WHEREAS, New Mexico's public higher education institutions rely on educators and education workers, including full-time faculty, temporary part-time faculty and graduate student employees, to provide instruction, research, student support and essential campus operations; and

WHEREAS, stable access to affordable health insurance supports workforce well-being, instructional continuity and the ability of educators and education workers to remain in their positions; and

WHEREAS, the availability and affordability of employer-

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1 supported health insurance vary across New Mexico's public
2 higher education institutions, creating uneven access to
3 medical care depending on where a worker is employed; and

4 WHEREAS, available New Mexico data indicate that the
5 university of New Mexico is the only public higher education
6 institution in New Mexico providing employer-funded medical
7 insurance for graduate student employees, and no public higher
8 education institution provides employer-funded dental or vision
9 coverage for graduate student employees; and

10 WHEREAS, survey findings regarding higher education
11 workers indicate significant financial insecurity and rent
12 burdens, conditions that can make health insurance premiums and
13 out-of-pocket medical costs unaffordable without employer
14 support; and

15 WHEREAS, New Mexico has an interest in understanding the
16 fiscal impact, administrative requirements and equity
17 implications of expanding health insurance coverage options for
18 public higher education educators and education workers across
19 institutions, including faculty, temporary part-time faculty
20 and graduate student employees;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
22 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative
23 finance committee be requested to conduct a comprehensive study
24 and to issue a report, in collaboration with the higher
25 education department, the department of finance and

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1 administration, the health care authority, the public higher
2 education institutions and higher education employer and
3 employee stakeholder organizations, on options to expand access
4 to health insurance to all public higher education educators
5 and graduate student employees; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study and report, at
7 minimum, evaluate health insurance availability and
8 affordability across institutions and the full range of
9 appointment types, including faculty, temporary part-time
10 faculty and graduate student employees engaged in instruction,
11 instructional support, research or degree-related academic
12 work, and identify gaps in eligibility, affordability and
13 coverage; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report include findings
15 and recommendations on:

16 A. options, including eligibility standards for
17 providing employer-supported medical coverage, and, where
18 feasible, dental and vision coverage for faculty, part-time
19 faculty and graduate student employees;

20 B. estimated fiscal impacts to the state and public
21 higher education institutions under multiple coverage
22 scenarios, including premium contributions, cost sharing,
23 administrative costs and phased implementation options;

24 C. potential funding approaches, including from
25 state, federal or private sources;

D. expected impacts on quality of life and financial stability for affected workers, including access to preventive care, continuity of care and mental health services;

E. expected impacts on recruitment and retention, workforce stability and student-facing outcomes tied to staffing continuity; and

F. recommended data collection and reporting standards to ensure comparable, statewide tracking of health coverage and costs across public higher education institutions over time; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the report be completed no later than October 1, 2026 and be provided to the governor, legislative finance committee, legislative education study committee, higher education department, department of finance and administration and health care authority; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, legislative finance committee, legislative education study committee, higher education department, department of finance and administration and health care authority.