

HOUSE MEMORIAL 52

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

INTRODUCED BY

Nicole Chavez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT OF INSURANCE, IN
CONSULTATION WITH THE HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY, TO CREATE A HEALTH
INSURANCE PREMIUM AFFORDABILITY STUDY GROUP.

WHEREAS, New Mexico's working families and small employers
depend on affordable and reliable health insurance coverage to
support economic security, workforce participation and strong
communities; and

WHEREAS, working families and small employers face unique
challenges regarding health benefits because they have less
purchasing power and fewer options to absorb premium increases
than larger employers; and

WHEREAS, national research surveying small business owners
has found that the cost of health insurance is a severe problem
for small business owners and is considered critical by

1 approximately forty-one percent of respondents; and

2 WHEREAS, facing unaffordable increases, some small
3 employers have reduced benefits, delayed offering coverage or
4 been priced out of offering insurance altogether, making it
5 harder to recruit and retain employees; and

6 WHEREAS, premium affordability challenges are often most
7 directly felt by small employers and by individuals and
8 families purchasing coverage in the individual market; and

9 WHEREAS, New Mexico policymakers consider legislation that
10 may affect health coverage requirements and health insurance
11 affordability, including proposals that may change covered
12 benefits, cost-sharing requirements and premium levels; and

13 WHEREAS, legislators would benefit from improved tools and
14 data to evaluate the expected impacts of proposed statutory
15 changes on health insurance premiums, consumer out-of-pocket
16 costs, utilization and public costs; and

17 WHEREAS, health insurance premiums for fully insured
18 coverage may reflect not only health care claims costs and
19 administrative expenses but also state-imposed taxes, fees and
20 assessments; and

21 WHEREAS, New Mexico would benefit from a structured, data-
22 driven and bipartisan approach to studying premium cost drivers
23 and options to improve affordability for small employers and
24 working families;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

.233509.2

1 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the office of
2 superintendent of insurance, in consultation with the health
3 care authority, be requested to create a health insurance
4 premium affordability study group to study rising health
5 insurance premiums and cost drivers in New Mexico's fully
6 insured individual and insured group health insurance markets;
7 and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the office of superintendent
9 of insurance, in consultation with the health care authority,
10 be requested to direct that the study group be composed of a
11 diverse group of members representing stakeholders affected by
12 rising health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket costs in New
13 Mexico's fully insured individual and small group markets,
14 including:

15 A. four members who represent the interests of
16 small employers and working families affected by rising
17 premiums and out-of-pocket costs;

18 B. four members who represent the interests of the
19 business and employer community;

20 C. four members who represent the health insurance
21 and health plan industry, including at least one licensed
22 health insurance agent or broker experienced in the fully
23 insured individual and small group markets;

24 D. the superintendent of insurance or the
25 superintendent's designee; and

.233509.2

1 E. the chief executive officer of the New Mexico
2 health insurance exchange or the chief executive officer's
3 designee; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group be requested
5 to conduct meetings and solicit input from additional
6 stakeholders and subject matter experts as determined necessary
7 by the study group, including health care providers, consumer
8 advocates, actuaries, economists and other experts in health
9 care finance and insurance markets; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group be requested
11 to study, evaluate and make findings and recommendations
12 regarding:

13 A. the primary drivers of premium changes in New
14 Mexico's fully insured individual and small group health
15 insurance markets, including trends in health care claims
16 costs, utilization, prescription drug costs, administrative
17 expenses and other premium components;

18 B. the affordability impacts of rising premiums and
19 out-of-pocket costs on small employers and working families,
20 including impacts on the ability of small employers to offer
21 coverage and remain competitive in recruiting and retaining
22 employees;

23 C. the extent to which state-imposed premium taxes,
24 fees and assessments applicable to fully insured health
25 insurance coverage affect premiums in the individual and small

1 group markets, including comparisons with surrounding and peer
2 states;

3 D. options to improve affordability and promote
4 market competitiveness while protecting access to quality
5 health care, including consideration of current benefit
6 mandates, coverage requirements and regulatory factors that may
7 contribute to premium growth;

8 E. tools, best practices and processes, including a
9 structured, evidence-based framework, to assist legislators in
10 obtaining objective, data-driven estimates of the drivers that
11 may affect health insurance benefits, coverage requirements,
12 cost-sharing requirements or premiums; and

13 F. recommendations for improving transparency for
14 small employers and consumers regarding premium cost drivers
15 and the expected impacts of statutory and regulatory changes;
16 and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study group be requested
18 to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations
19 to the legislative finance committee and legislative health and
20 human services committee by October 1, 2026; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
22 transmitted to the superintendent of insurance, the chief
23 executive officer of the New Mexico health insurance exchange,
24 the secretary of health care authority, the secretary of
25 health, the president pro tempore of the senate and the speaker

.233509.2

underscored material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 of the house of representatives.

2 - 6 -

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

.233509.2