

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN TO LEAD A STUDY ON THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE.

WHEREAS, the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 was enacted by the United States congress; and

WHEREAS, people who take advantage of the provisions of the act do so for justifiable and generally unavoidable reasons; and

WHEREAS, currently, taking family medical leave poses a hardship on many individuals due to the fact that no wages are earned during the period of time they are on leave; and

WHEREAS, the public health costs of not providing wage replacement for medical leave may include deferred but needed medical treatment and resultant increased future costs; and

WHEREAS, the impact of not providing wage replacement for appropriate family or medical leave may include poor health care for infants whose mothers must return to work too soon after giving birth; and

WHEREAS, the impact of employers providing paid family and medical leave on overall employment, retention, recruitment costs and productivity is not known; and

WHEREAS, it may be possible to fund wage replacement during family and medical leave through existing state

insurance systems, including expansion of the temporary disability or unemployment insurance system; and

WHEREAS, the impact on companies with fewer than fifty employees may vary greatly from larger companies; and

WHEREAS, other government programs, including welfare, may either benefit or be harmed by providing wage replacement to individuals on family or medical leave;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the commission on the status of women be requested to lead a task force to study the costs and benefits of providing wage replacement to employees who take family and medical leave; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include representation from large and small businesses, statewide business organizations, organized labor, women, seniors, children's experts, health professionals and insurance carriers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study address all issues deemed relevant to the question of providing paid medical and family leave; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission on the status of women present a report on paid medical and family leave to the legislative health and human services committee at its October 2002 meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be

sent to the commission on the status of women and the interim legislative health and human services committee.