

**MINUTES  
of the  
SIXTH MEETING  
of the  
LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**October 6-9, 2025  
University of New Mexico  
Comprehensive Cancer Center Auditorium  
1201 Camino de Salud NE  
Albuquerque**

The sixth meeting of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was called to order by Representative Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson, chair, on Monday, October 6, 2025, at 9:06 a.m. at the University of New Mexico (UNM) Comprehensive Cancer Center Auditorium in Albuquerque.

**Present**

Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson, Chair  
Sen. Linda M. López, Vice Chair  
Sen. Jay C. Block (10/7)  
Rep. Eleanor Chávez  
Rep. Pamela Herndon  
Rep. Jenifer Jones (10/7, 10/8, 10/9)  
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez

**Absent**

Sen. Larry R. Scott

**Advisory Members**

Rep. Marianna Anaya  
Rep. John Block  
Rep. Kathleen Cates  
Sen. Angel M. Charley (10/8)  
Sen. Katy Duhigg (10/7)  
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary  
Sen. David M. Gallegos (10/7, 10/8)  
Rep. Miguel P. García (10/6, 10/8, 10/9)  
Rep. Anita Gonzales (10/8)  
Sen. Martin Hickey (10/6, 10/7)  
Rep. Tara L. Lujan (10/6, 10/7)  
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto (10/7, 10/8, 10/9)  
Sen. Harold Pope  
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero  
Rep. E. Diane Torres-Velásquez (10/6, 10/8, 10/9)

Rep. Christine Chandler  
Rep. Nicole Chavez  
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson  
Rep. Alan T. Martinez  
Rep. Elaine Sena Cortez  
Rep. Sarah Silva  
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics  
Rep. Reena Szczepanski

**Guest Legislator**

Sen. Nicole Tobiassen (10/7)

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

## **Staff**

Zander Dawson, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)

Andrea Lazarow, Bill Drafter, LCS

Grace Balderamos, Staff, LCS

## **Guests**

The guest list is in the meeting file.

## **Handouts**

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

## **References to Webcast**

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at [www.nmlegis.gov](http://www.nmlegis.gov), under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

## **Monday, October 6**

### **Welcome and Introductions (9:06 a.m.)**

Representative Thomson welcomed everyone to the meeting. Committee members introduced themselves.

### **Welcome to UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center (9:10 a.m.)**

Yolanda Sanchez, Ph.D., professor, Department of Internal Medicine, UNM School of Medicine, and director and chief executive officer (CEO), UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center, provided information about the UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center's patient care, research, new technology and plans for the near future. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

### **UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC) Overview (9:47 a.m.)**

Michael Richards, M.D., M.P.A., executive vice president, UNM HSC, and CEO, UNM Health System, provided an update on the UNM HSC clinics, facilities, career pathway programs and graduate medical education programs. Hengameh Raissy, Pharm.D., vice president for research, UNM HSC, described research conducted by the UNM HSC and potential impacts of the 2025 federal budget reconciliation bill on future research. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=2>.

**Approval of Minutes (11:16 a.m.)**

Upon a motion made, and without any objections, the committee approved the minutes of the June 25-27, 2025, July 21-23, 2025, August 18-20, 2025 and September 10-12, 2025 meetings.

**Bernalillo County Opioid Settlement Funding and Behavioral Health Initiatives (11:18 a.m.)**

Cindy Chavez, county manager, Bernalillo County, and Wayne Lindstrom, Ph.D., deputy county manager, Behavioral Health Authority, Bernalillo County, reviewed Bernalillo County's behavioral health strategic plan and opioid recurring funding plan. They highlighted collaborations with the City of Albuquerque for opioid use prevention and treatment and described the county Behavioral Health Authority's data and accountability dashboard, which will go live later this year. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

**Medicaid Accountability Report (1:02 p.m.)**

Allegra Hernandez, Ph.D., fiscal analyst, Legislative Finance Committee (LFC); Harry Rommel, Ph.D., fiscal analyst, LFC; and Myja Peterson, principal analyst, LFC, presented the LFC's biennial Medicaid accountability report, which addressed Medicaid enrollment, access, expenditures, administrative oversight and network adequacy. Dana Flannery, director, Medical Assistance Division, Health Care Authority, discussed expenditures related to managed care organizations and Medicaid utilization, costs and spending. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

**Michigan Model of Medical Malpractice (2:22 p.m.)**

Richard C. Boothman, J.D., adjunct assistant professor, Department of Surgery, University of Michigan Medical School, and visiting scholar, Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, gave a presentation about legal procedures in Michigan regarding medical malpractice. Elizabeth Baker, M.D., J.D., C.H.C., M.B., professor, UNM School of Medicine, compared various medical malpractice models. They discussed the intersection of legal, medical and cultural philosophies of malpractice resolution. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

**Project ECHO (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes) (4:31 p.m.)**

Karla Thornton, M.D., M.P.H., interim executive director, Project ECHO, and professor of medicine, UNM HSC, provided information about Project ECHO, including patient access and demographics, recent publications and collaborations with state agencies. She explained how Project ECHO telehealth sessions work and outlined Project ECHO's behavioral health

initiatives, addiction treatment and civics and justice programs. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=6>.

**Public Comment (5:12 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 5:16 p.m.

**Tuesday, October 7**

**Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 9:36 a.m.

**National Evidence on the Effects of Medical Malpractice Reform (9:39 a.m.)**

Bernard Black, professor, Pritzker School of Law and Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University, compared New Mexico tort reform data to those of other states regarding medical malpractice premiums, paid claims, payouts and damage caps. He offered suggestions for how the laws governing the Patient's Compensation Fund could be amended. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=7>.

**The Harms of Private Equity in Health Care (11:10 a.m.)**

Olivia Webb Kosloff, senior fellow, American Economic Liberties Project, spoke about the impacts of private equity ownership of hospitals, nursing homes and physician practices on the quality of health care services and outcomes. She addressed reliable staffing issues, access to care, patient safety, costs and clinic closures. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=8>.

**Recruiting Health Care Professionals (1:01 p.m.)**

Jerry N. Harrison, Ph.D., executive director, New Mexico Health Resources, Inc., reviewed the number of vacancies in health care job positions in the state; shared responses from young health professionals who do not want to practice in New Mexico, explaining why they would prefer to work elsewhere; and noted New Mexico Health Resources, Inc.'s outreach activities and initiatives. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=9>.

**Medical Malpractice Payments and Medical Discipline in New Mexico: What Reports to the National Practitioner Data Bank Show (2:11 p.m.)**

Robert E. Oshel, Ph.D., former associate director for research and disputes, National Practitioner Data Bank, offered suggestions for how medical malpractice could be reduced in New Mexico. He explained licensure actions taken by medical boards and noted malpractice payments in other states. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=10>.

**Health Care Workforce Update (3:08 p.m.)**

Dr. Rommel gave a presentation on the types of federal and state loan repayment programs administered by the National Health Service Corps and the Higher Education Department. He discussed federal funding opportunities through the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Rural Health Transformation Program. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=11>.

**Public Comment (3:54 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Motion to Draft Letter (4:09 p.m.)**

On a motion made by Representative Chávez and seconded by Representative Ferrary, and without objection, the committee voted to draft a letter to the Public School Insurance Authority to inquire about an insurance program that purportedly provides financial incentives to patients who choose to receive orthopedic surgery out of state.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 4:13 p.m.

**Wednesday, October 7**

**Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 9:07 a.m.

**Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Initiative (9:07 a.m.)**

Nawshin Ahmed, senior associate, Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Initiative, Pew Charitable Trusts, shared strategies for expanding access to methadone throughout the state,

noted gaps in residential treatment for substance abuse in New Mexico and described the collaborative care model for treating substance use disorders, which integrates behavioral health into primary care settings. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=12>.

#### **Job Architecture Update (10:00 a.m.)**

Dylan Lange, director, State Personnel Office (SPO), and Cynthia Sandoval, deputy director, SPO, discussed the recent overhaul of the state's job architecture framework. They explained the state's new single uniform salary structure and job architecture challenges related to job categorization, pay grade alignment, job titling and career tracks. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=13>.

#### **Services for Victims of Sexual Assault (11:00 a.m.)**

Alexandria Taylor, M.P.A., L.M.S.W., executive director, New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.; Jess Clark, director of prevention, New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs, Inc.; and Oshay Jaramillo, executive director, Roberta's Place, Inc., discussed sexual violence services and prevention. They highlighted the impacts of children's advocacy centers and the New Mexico Sexual Assault Helpline. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=14>.

#### **Protocall Services (1:04 p.m.)**

Rosella Sanchez, director, Community and Stakeholder Relations, Protocall Services, Inc.; Claire Carmony, 988 manager, Protocall Services Inc.; and Paul Galloway, outreach coordinator, Protocall Services Inc., provided an update on the growth and offerings of the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. They highlighted the resources and referrals frequently shared with callers and positive outcomes resulting from calls. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=15>.

#### **City of Albuquerque School-Based Violence Intervention Program (2:03 p.m.)**

Samantha Sengel, chief administrative officer, City of Albuquerque; Jodie Esquibel, director, Albuquerque Community Safety Department, City of Albuquerque; Jasmine Desiderio, deputy director, Violence Intervention Program, Albuquerque Community Safety Department, City of Albuquerque; and Jeffery Bustamante, community outreach manager, Albuquerque Community Safety Department, City of Albuquerque, discussed the Albuquerque Community Safety Department's School-Based Violence Intervention Program, which is a violence reduction

initiative that is active in four schools in the Albuquerque Public School District (APS). Michele Torres, principal, West Mesa High School, APS, shared her experience with the program's implementation at West Mesa High School. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=16>.

**New Mexico Alliance of Health Councils (NMAHC) (3:12 p.m.)**

Valeria Alarcón, executive director, NMAHC, and Gerilyn Antonio, tribal liaison, NMAHC, provided an update on the NMAHC's services, programs, advocacy and collaborations with public health agencies. They described how county and tribal health councils have evolved since the passage of the County and Tribal Health Councils Act in 2019 and discussed funding for health councils. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=17>.

**Public Comment (4:42 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Motion to Draft Letter (5:04 p.m.)**

On a motion made by Representative Chávez and seconded by Senator Sedillo Lopez, and without objection, the committee voted to draft a letter to the State Personnel Office about issues related to the office's recent overhaul of the state job architecture structure.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 5:05 p.m.

**Thursday, October 9**

**Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 8:33 a.m.

**Juvenile Justice: Community Services (8:34 a.m.)**

Lorilynn Violanta, co-executive director, New Mexico Child Advocacy Networks, discussed alternatives to incarceration of youth. Reed Ridens, advocate, New Mexico Child Advocacy Networks, shared his lived experience in the juvenile justice system in New Mexico and described his experience as a youth leader at New Mexico Child Advocacy Networks. Gerri Bachicha, chief programs officer, New Day Youth and Family Services, provided information about New Day Youth and Family Services' reception assessment centers. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=18>.

### **Juvenile Drug Treatment Court and Community Gun Violence Programs (9:25 a.m.)**

The Honorable Alma Roberson, presiding Children's Court judge, Second Judicial District Court; Tanya Tijerina, clinical operations manager, Second Judicial District Court; and Lindsey Jones, program manager, Children's Court Division, Second Judicial District Court, provided an overview of the Second Judicial District Court's community gun violence intervention program and the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court's gun violence intervention track, which aim to address the root causes of juvenile firearm offenses. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=19>.

### **Children's Code Reform Task Force Findings (10:00 a.m.)**

The Honorable John Romero, Jr., retired Children's Court judge, Second Judicial District Court, reviewed a report prepared by the Children's Code Reform Task Force about why incarcerating youth often fails, the racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, adverse childhood experiences, a proposed Crossover Youth Act and the Annie E. Casey Foundation's juvenile detention alternatives initiative. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=20>.

### **APS Restorative Justice Program (10:42 a.m.)**

Erin Chavez, teacher and restorative practices coordinator, Garfield STEM Magnet and Community Middle School; Joshua Laclair, principal, Garfield STEM Magnet and Community Middle School; and Kenneth Salazar, associate superintendent, APS, compared punitive and restorative discipline in schools and discussed restorative practices at Garfield STEM Magnet and Community Middle School that have resulted in fewer student suspensions. They noted that APS plans to implement restorative practices districtwide. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=21>.

### **La Plazita Institute (11:10 a.m.)**

Rodrigo Rodriguez, director, Justice for Youth Community Collaborative, La Plazita Institute, and Albino Garcia, Jr., founder and executive director, La Plazita Institute, provided information about La Plazita Institute's Justice for Youth Community Collaborative's advocacy for youth justice policy reform. Tracey Chavez, member, Stronger Together, Never Alone, and Brandi Sedillo, founding member, Stronger Together, Never Alone, spoke about Stronger Together, Never Alone, which is a support group for parents of incarcerated youth. Christopher Herrera, founder, Better Big Homies, spoke about the mentorship Better Big Homies provides to justice-involved youth. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=22>.



**Bernalillo County Youth Services Center — A History and Purpose in a Response to Juvenile Crime (11:43 a.m.)**

Tamera Marcantel, director, Bernalillo County Youth Services Center, and Carmela Romero, deputy director of administration, Bernalillo County Youth Services Center, discussed challenges faced by the Bernalillo County Youth Services Center, such as increased lengths of stays of detainees, staffing and funding difficulties and an increase in the average daily detainee population. They noted that the center will create a compliance unit and compared the population of the center to those of other youth detention facilities. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=23>.

**Community-Based Organizations Serving New Mexico (12:55 p.m.)**

Dawn Hommer, CEO, Community Action Agency of Southern New Mexico; Michelle Katz, executive director, Communities in Schools of New Mexico (CISNM); Aseneth Ultreras, alumna and member, Board of Directors, CISNM; Naomi Chavez Lopez, executive director, SWIFT Community Schools; Deanna Creighton, managing director, ABC Community School Partnership; Colby Wilson, chief encouragement officer, Boys and Girls Clubs of Central New Mexico; and Michael Conners, club youth and winner, Regional Youth of the Year, Boys and Girls Clubs of Central New Mexico, shared their personal experiences with community-based organizations and highlighted the positive impacts of community engagement. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=10/6/2025&ItemNumber=24>.

**Public Comment (1:49 p.m.)**

A list of individuals who made public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 2:08 p.m.