

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF END-STAGE RENAL DISEASE
AND KIDNEY DIALYSIS TREATMENT BY THE INTERIM LEGISLATIVE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE.

WHEREAS, end-stage renal disease, or kidney failure, is
growing at the rate of six percent per year; and

WHEREAS, this disease either kills its victims or they
eventually join those fortunate persons who receive
successful kidney transplants; and

WHEREAS, the only other hope patients have is kidney
dialysis, a process currently keeping one thousand six
hundred New Mexicans alive; and

WHEREAS, two hundred seventy-four dialysis patients are
now candidates for transplants; and

WHEREAS, kidney dialysis is usually necessary two or
three times each week for each patient, taking several hours
for the process in addition to travel time; and

WHEREAS, such a treatment regimen means that many
dialysis patients do not have the physical stamina to work
and contribute to their family's income; and

WHEREAS, many dialysis patients live a considerable
distance from New Mexico's twenty-six dialysis centers,
making transportation issues a considerable burden; and

WHEREAS, more than a dozen of these transplant patients

live without a telephone or adequate communication technology necessary to learn of possible life-saving transplant opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the financial burdens of such a chronic disease quickly drain a family's resources; and

WHEREAS, many dialysis patients are without health insurance, making a serious problem potentially tragic; and

WHEREAS, current medical technology could return many of these New Mexicans to productive lives if additional resources were available; and

WHEREAS, many patients came to dialysis after ignoring early warning signs about their health, including symptoms of diabetes, a disease having a disproportionately high impact on the Native American populations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the interim legislative health and human services committee be requested to study the various aspects of end-stage renal disease, kidney dialysis and all issues relevant to the New Mexicans suffering from this potentially fatal condition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include consideration of kidney disease patients' limited resources and extra financial burdens, including access to communication and transportation to distant clinics and the availability of insurance to defray the cost of life-saving

prescription drugs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health, the human services department, the New Mexico office of Indian affairs, the health sciences center of the university of New Mexico and other appropriate state agencies cooperate in the study of end-stage renal disease patients' needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee make its recommendations to the first session of the forty-fifth legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be sent to the secretary of health, the secretary of human services, the vice president for health sciences at the university of New Mexico, the executive director of the New Mexico office of Indian affairs and the interim legislative health and human services committee.