

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO EXAMINE APPROPRIATE METHODS OF ESTABLISHING NURSING HOME STAFFING LEVELS AND RELATED ISSUES.

WHEREAS, quality of care in nursing homes is a primary goal of both the state of New Mexico, which licenses such facilities, and the nursing home industry, which provides care to our senior citizens and disabled persons; and

WHEREAS, complaints to the ombudsman office of the state agency on aging have indicated after investigation that many concerns focus on insufficient staffing at some nursing homes; and

WHEREAS, there is an acknowledged shortage of nursing home health care professionals, including registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and certified nursing aides throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, the department of health has promulgated the state's first rules establishing minimum staffing requirements and the availability of staffing level information for consumers' and patients' families, which went into effect in August 2000; and

WHEREAS, the department of health has regulatory authority to ensure the quality of nursing home services and has a demonstrated commitment to improve the quality of

nursing home services through collaboration with consumers, providers, advocates and other state agencies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be requested to lead its long-term care regulatory quality cabinet in continued study of nursing home staffing issues, focusing on acuity-based staffing, to meet the needs of New Mexico's long-term care nursing home residents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include review of other states' best practices, their approach to acuity-based staffing, methods for measuring compliance and definitions of direct care staff and related issues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that participants include all key stakeholders, including the state agency on aging, the human services department, other appropriate state agencies, consumers and representation from the nursing home industry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health report progress and legislative recommendations on acuity-based staffing and related issues to the interim legislative health and human services committee by November 1, 2002; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be sent to the state agency on aging, the human services department, the legislative health and human services committee and other appropriate groups.