

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH STUDY THE NEED FOR
ADDITIONAL TREATMENT BEDS FOR VIOLENT, MENTALLY ILL ADOLESCENTS,
ESPECIALLY VIOLENT, MENTALLY ILL ADOLESCENT FEMALES.

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WHEREAS, in providing funding for the construction and operation of the Sequoyah adolescent treatment center, it was the intent of the New Mexico legislature that treatment be provided for violent, mentally ill adolescents and that such children be served regardless of gender or whether acute or chronic conditions are involved; and

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WHEREAS, it was the intent of the legislature that, of the four treatment pods comprising the center, one should house female residents and one should treat children with acute conditions; and

WHEREAS, although the center is fully operational and capable of providing treatment for up to thirty-six violent, mentally ill adolescents, this treatment is provided exclusively to boys and largely for chronic conditions; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuous waiting list for acceptance into the program; and

WHEREAS, changes in medicaid regulations have lessened the availability of beds and facilities for treatment throughout the state of both chronically and acutely mentally ill adolescents, chronic cases in particular; and

WHEREAS, juvenile detention and commitment facilities are not capable of providing necessary therapeutic intervention for the considerable number of their residents who require such treatment; and

WHEREAS, the need and demand for such services now far exceeds the availability of beds; and

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WHEREAS, there is room for facility expansion on the grounds of the Sequoyah adolescent treatment center; and

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WHEREAS, the Sequoyah adolescent treatment center advisory board recognizes the critical need for a residential treatment facility for female adolescents;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be requested to conduct a study to determine the nature and scope of the need for additional treatment beds, with particular attention to the need for the provision of additional resources for the treatment of violent, mentally ill adolescent females; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health report its findings to the legislative health and human services committee at its October 2003 meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the department of health and to the legislative health and human services committee.