

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ALIGNING EARLY CHILD
CARE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, research has shown that high-quality pre-kindergarten early education programs produce long-term benefits for children who enroll in them, including improved overall academic performance, increased motivation, increased self-confidence, better attendance in school and improved classroom behavior; and

WHEREAS, economic analysis of research has shown that every dollar spent on providing high-quality early care and education programs results in a seven-dollar (\$7.00) savings to taxpayers; and

WHEREAS, thirty-six states currently have legislation mandating the coordination of child care systems with other early education systems and twenty-one states have laws that require early childhood education programs to coordinate with child care programs in order to be eligible for funding under a statewide early childhood initiative; and

WHEREAS, in New Mexico, there is currently no entity responsible for the coordination of early care and education programs or for the collection of data about existing systems of early care and education such as the number of children being served, types of programs available, the amount of federal and state funds being expended for these services and the purpose or expected outcomes of programs; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that approximately two hundred fifty million dollars (\$250,000,000) of federal and state funds are being expended annually for early care and education programs in New Mexico; and

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WHEREAS, the interagency coordinating group was created in law within the children, youth and families department in 1992 and is comprised of the secretary of finance and administration, the secretary of health, the secretary of human services, the secretary of labor, the superintendent of public instruction, the chairman of the joint interim legislative health and human services committee and a member of governor's office; and

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WHEREAS, the purpose of the interagency coordinating group is to assist the secretary of children, youth and families and the children, youth and families advisory committee in planning the coordination of services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the interagency coordinating group be requested to study the alignment of early care education programs in New Mexico, establish a framework for a statewide comprehensive and universal system of preschool programs and fully delineate the procedures and methodology necessary to implement such a framework; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency coordinating group report its findings and recommendations to the legislative education study committee by November 2003; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the interagency coordinating group and the director of the legislative education study committee for appropriate distribution.