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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 82
46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2003

INTRODUCED BY
Rick Miera

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE IN COOPERATION WITH LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES AND PROVIDERS OF SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO THE HOMELESS, INCLUDING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT, THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, THE LABOR DEPARTMENT, THE NEW MEXICO VETERANS' SERVICE COMMISSION, THE CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT, THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION AND THE NEW MEXICO MORTGAGE FINANCE AUTHORITY, TO ADDRESS THE CHRONIC PROBLEM OF HOMELESSNESS AND TO BETTER PROVIDE ACCESS TO MAINSTREAM SERVICES TO THE HOMELESS IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, approximately thirteen thousand people in New Mexico, including veterans, families with children and persons with disabilities, are homeless at any given date and time; and

WHEREAS, it has been found that people who are chronically

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1 homeless most often suffer serious mental health and substance
2 use disorders, also called co-occurring disorders; and

3 WHEREAS, it has been found that without proper treatment
4 and support, the chronically homeless are high users of jail,
5 emergency room and other hospital services, causing an undue
6 financial burden of approximately forty thousand dollars
7 (\$40,000) per person each year to local community service
8 systems, including local governments; and

9 WHEREAS, the federal department of health and human
10 services, in conjunction with the veterans' administration and
11 the department of housing and urban development, has invited
12 representatives from New Mexico's public and private sector to
13 participate in a national policy academy to address the problem
14 of chronic homelessness, to determine how to better provide
15 access to mainstream services to the homeless and to develop
16 state action plans; and

17 WHEREAS, a state action plan to resolve chronic
18 homelessness in New Mexico must include economic development
19 incentives, affordable housing and integrated health and
20 educational supports and services, including therapeutic
21 daycare and substance abuse and behavioral health treatment;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
23 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be requested
24 to convene a task force in cooperation with local, state and
25 federal agencies and providers of support and services to the

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1 homeless, including the human services department, the
2 children, youth and families department, the state department
3 of public education, the labor department, the New Mexico
4 veterans' service commission, the corrections department, the
5 New Mexico health policy commission and the New Mexico mortgage
6 finance authority, to address the chronic problem of
7 homelessness and to better provide access to mainstream
8 services to the homeless in New Mexico; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a state
10 action plan to address chronic homelessness in New Mexico and
11 present its findings and recommendations to the governor and
12 the appropriate interim legislative committee before the second
13 session of the forty-sixth legislature; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the secretary of health and to the human
16 services department, the children, youth and families
17 department, the state department of public education, the labor
18 department, the New Mexico veterans' service commission, the
19 corrections department, the New Mexico health policy commission
20 and the New Mexico mortgage finance authority.