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HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 77

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

INTRODUCED BY

Gail C. Beam

A JOINT MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING THE CHILDREN'S CABINET TO OVERSEE AN IMMEDIATE
EFFORT TO CREATE A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO PROTECTING AND
CARING FOR CHILDREN FOUND IN A METHAMPHETAMINE PRODUCTION
ENVIRONMENT.**

**WHEREAS, the illegal use and abuse of methamphetamine in
New Mexico is a serious concern; and**

**WHEREAS, the materials used in the production of
methamphetamine may be seriously harmful to humans, especially
to young children; and**

**WHEREAS many people engaged in illegal methamphetamine use
and production are parents; and**

**WHEREAS, New Mexico is committed to protecting its
children; and**

WHEREAS, there is a lack of factual public information of

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1 the possible dangers associated with methamphetamine
2 production; and

3 WHEREAS, it is important to identify and quantify the
4 health hazards to innocent bystanders; and

5 WHEREAS, the effects of inhaling harmful substances on
6 developing respiratory systems is still unknown; and

7 WHEREAS, the best interest of children, including their
8 physical health and mental health needs, must be of primary
9 importance in immediate response and treatment; and

10 WHEREAS, there is a need to identify primary
11 methamphetamine manufacturers while separating unknowing
12 bystanders or innocent victims; and

13 WHEREAS, children need the stability of their family and
14 every attempt must be made to keep children safely at home; and

15 WHEREAS, parents must be given the resources to protect
16 their children; and

17 WHEREAS, today there is no single coordinated statewide
18 protocol among law enforcement, child welfare, community and
19 health responder agencies and other organizations to ensure
20 that an exposed child receive immediate and "best practices"
21 treatment and resources to safeguard that child's health,
22 family and future; and

23 WHEREAS, the responses to this complex problem must be
24 multidisciplinary, logical and humane; and

25 WHEREAS, New Mexico has a standing children's cabinet

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1 dedicated to creating a bright and healthy future for children
2 and families;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
4 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children's cabinet be requested to
5 immediately assemble a working task force of all the
6 appropriate agencies to develop and oversee implementation of a
7 "best practices" coordinated multidisciplinary approach to
8 safeguard children found in a methamphetamine production
9 environment or believed to be exposed to methamphetamine
10 ingredients; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that participants include the
12 department of public safety, the children, youth and families
13 department, the department of health, an academy of pediatrics,
14 children's mental health professionals, shelter care agencies,
15 including domestic violence and homeless shelters, relevant
16 social service providers, foster parents, child advocates and
17 representatives of law enforcement agencies; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force produce and
19 implement a detailed coordinated protocol for determining the
20 immediate physical and mental health status needs of such
21 children; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that recommendations include an
23 analysis of the specific number of children exposed and report
24 the extent of the health hazards and effects on all persons who
25 may be exposed to or living in the immediate residential

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1 environment of the methamphetamine manufacturing process; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop and the
3 responsible agencies identify community housing alternatives
4 and follow-up resources for children and their parents, and
5 provide special training for foster parents who may be
6 requested to accept children exposed to the methamphetamine
7 manufacturing process; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a report be made at the
9 October 2004 meeting of the interim legislative health and
10 human services committee and the interim corrections oversight
11 and justice committee; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the children's cabinet issue a
13 public report; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the children's cabinet, the department of
16 health, the department of public safety, the children, youth
17 and families department and law enforcement agencies statewide.