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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 16

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

INTRODUCED BY

Linda M Lopez

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT A TASK FORCE CONTINUE ITS WORK ON ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS.

WHEREAS, annually, at least five thousand New Mexico children have a parent or both parents in prison; and

WHEREAS, these children are six to eight times more likely to be incarcerated themselves later in their lives; and

WHEREAS, the majority of families caring for these children are living below the federal poverty level; and

WHEREAS, many of these children experience serious behavioral problems, but these problems are seldom identified and the children rarely receive necessary services; and

WHEREAS, often these children and families qualify for benefits but receive them only on occasion; and

WHEREAS, being the child of an incarcerated parent is not

a crime but these children are often neglected; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Senate Joint Memorial 15 of the 2003 regular legislative session, a task force began work on creating a plan to address the needs of children of incarcerated parents; and

WHEREAS, in order to better develop plans for identifying children of incarcerated parents and to further develop an interdepartmental plan for serving those children, the task force wants to continue its work during the 2004 interim;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families department and the human services department continue to convene a task force to develop a plan for identifying children of incarcerated parents and to develop an interdepartmental plan to address the needs of those children; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include a representative from the department of health, the public education department, the corrections department, the state agency on aging, the public defender department, a statewide association of district court judges, a state law enforcement agency, a local law enforcement agency, a statewide association of district attorneys, an entity that provides caregiver services for children and families and an entity that is an advocate for children and families, as well as a representative from the law enforcement advisory committee of the New Mexico

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association of counties who is a detention administrator; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a system for identifying and inventorying needs and services and the barriers to accessing those services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop a coordinated system of evaluation and intake for all children of incarcerated parents; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force develop an integrated plan of service delivery, budgeting, performance measures and accountability; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its progress and recommendations to the interim corrections oversight and justice committee and the interim legislative health and human services committee no later than November 1, 2004: and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the children, youth and families department, the human services department, the department of health, the public education department, the corrections department, a statewide association of district court judges, state law enforcement agencies, local law enforcement agencies, a statewide association of district attorneys, caregivers for children and families, advocates for children and families and the law enforcement advisory committee of the New Mexico association of counties.

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