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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 80

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

Nancy Rodriguez

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO LEAD A TASK FORCE OF STATE AGENCIES AND OTHERS TO MAKE DECENT HOUSING AVAILABLE FOR PERSONS SUFFERING FROM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND OTHER DISABLING CONDITIONS.

WHEREAS, the behavioral health needs of the people of New Mexico are serious and growing, to the point that behavioral health services are being separated from other health care under medicaid so that people can receive increased attention; and

WHEREAS, this need for increased attention and funding is being given special priority through the recent creation and development of the interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative, which will coordinate both services and funding; and

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1 WHEREAS, the new aging and long-term services department
2 has established a housing subcommittee to study and recommend
3 solutions for this long-neglected need; and

4 WHEREAS, for years, the national association for the
5 mentally ill in New Mexico has worked diligently to increase
6 the availability of services for the mentally ill and others
7 with behavioral health problems; and

8 WHEREAS, a stable housing situation is critical to the
9 provision of services to those with serious behavioral health
10 problems; and

11 WHEREAS, barriers to affordable housing include poverty;
12 behavioral health issues; age, for both the young and the
13 elderly; having a police record; and a lack of adequate housing
14 for Native Americans; and

15 WHEREAS, other issues affecting residential security
16 include substandard group homes, various shared-living
17 arrangements, unlicensed care facilities and unsupervised
18 private housing of the elderly and mentally ill, where persons
19 need assistance with medications and other needs; and

20 WHEREAS, housing options in New Mexico are not sufficient
21 to meet current needs, nor those in the foreseeable future; and

22 WHEREAS, homelessness is often complicated by dual
23 diagnosis and other behavioral health problems and a severely
24 inadequate and often punitive response system;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

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1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department be
2 requested to lead a task force to investigate and recommend
3 solutions to the many problems facing those persons who are
4 homeless or have serious behavioral health problems and who
5 lack stable living situations or adequate housing; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the goal of the task force be
7 the creation of safe, decent and affordable housing for all New
8 Mexicans; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the state housing authority,
10 the mortgage finance authority, the behavioral health services
11 division of the department of health, the aging and long-term
12 services department, the interagency behavioral health
13 purchasing collaborative, protection and advocacy
14 representatives, consumers and providers all be represented on
15 the task force; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force provide a
17 progress report to the legislative finance committee and the
18 interim legislative health and human services committee at
19 their respective October 2005 meetings, with a final report
20 presented to the same committees in September 2006; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
22 transmitted to the state housing authority, the department of
23 health, the aging and long-term services department, the
24 legislative finance committee and the interim legislative
25 health and human services committee.