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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

	ORIGINAL DATE 2/13/06		
SPONSOR	Miera	LAST UPDATED	HB HJM 78
	EARLY CARE & EDUCATION RETIREMENT		
SHORT TITLE	BENEFITS	SB	
		ANALYST	Weber

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY06	FY07		
	None		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

SUMMARY

House Joint Memorial 78 indicates that professionally trained early childhood teachers and program directors are essential to ensuring that quality programs are available for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The turnover rate of teachers is very high, between twenty-two percent and thirty-three percent a year, according to the 2004 New Mexico early care and education workforce study. Long-term, stable relationships are essential in the lives of the youngest children, and the departure of teachers causes disruptions in early childhood programs and in the fabric of trust and connection developed over time between young children and their teachers. High-quality early childhood programs are necessary to ensure that children are ready for school when they enter kindergarten. When early child care and education teachers gain more education and acquire advanced degrees, they often leave early childhood programs to work in public schools, where salaries, benefits and working conditions are substantially better. The New Mexico early care and education workforce study indicates that one-third of early childhood teachers have no health insurance. Many early childhood teachers are not eligible for the state coverage insurance program because their incomes are more than two hundred percent of the federal poverty level. The New Mexico early care and education workforce study participants listed higher pay and better benefits as the top factors that would make teachers and program directors more likely to remain in their jobs.

The joint memorial asks that the legislative health and human services committee be requested to study the value and impact of providing medical, retirement and other benefits to early care and education teachers and directors, identify methods to deliver and finance benefits and report its findings and recommendations, if any, to the first session of the forty-eighth legislature; and that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the chair of the legislative health and human

services committee.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Since it seems most of the early childhood programs are private entities what mechanism will be used to direct public funds for this use?

MW/mt