

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 74

2 **47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2006**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE
12 TO STUDY THE MEDICAL, RETIREMENT AND OTHER BENEFITS PROVIDED TO
13 THE EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION WORKFORCE.

14
15 WHEREAS, professionally trained early childhood teachers
16 and program directors are essential to ensuring that quality
17 programs are available for infants, toddlers and preschoolers;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, the turnover rate of teachers is very high,
20 between twenty-two percent and thirty-three percent a year,
21 according to the 2004 New Mexico early care and education
22 workforce study; and

23 WHEREAS, long-term, stable relationships are essential in
24 the lives of the youngest children, and the departure of
25 teachers causes disruptions in early childhood programs and in

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1 the fabric of trust and connection developed over time between
2 young children and their teachers; and

3 WHEREAS, high-quality early childhood programs are
4 necessary to ensure that children are ready for school when
5 they enter kindergarten; and

6 WHEREAS, when early child care and education teachers gain
7 more education and acquire advanced degrees, they often leave
8 early childhood programs to work in public schools, where
9 salaries, benefits and working conditions are substantially
10 better; and

11 WHEREAS, the New Mexico early care and education workforce
12 study indicates that one-third of early childhood teachers have
13 no health insurance; and

14 WHEREAS, many early childhood teachers are not eligible
15 for the state coverage insurance program because their incomes
16 are more than two hundred percent of the federal poverty level;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, the New Mexico early care and education workforce
19 study participants listed higher pay and better benefits as the
20 top factors that would make teachers and program directors more
21 likely to remain in their jobs;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
23 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative health and human
24 services committee be requested to study the value and impact
25 of providing medical, retirement and other benefits to early

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1 care and education teachers and directors, identify methods to
2 deliver and finance benefits and report its findings and
3 recommendations, if any, to the first session of the forty-
4 eighth legislature; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the chair of the legislative health and human
7 services committee.

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