

A JOINT MEMORIAL

ENDORING THE REAUTHORIZATION OF THE FEDERAL INDIAN HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT.

WHEREAS, the federal Indian Health Care Improvement Act was enacted by congress in 1976 but expired in 2000 and has not yet been reauthorized; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans in New Mexico and across the nation experience the highest rates of cancer, obesity, diabetes and heart disease, yet are adversely affected by limited access to health care due to chronic underfunding of the Indian health service; and

WHEREAS, the federal government, through treaties entered into with tribal entities, has the primary responsibility for providing health care to the Native American population in New Mexico and the United States; and

WHEREAS, disparities in the health care provided to Native Americans have been documented many times, including in the July 2003 report of the United States commission on civil rights, entitled "A Quiet Crisis: Federal Funding and Unmet Needs in Indian Country" and the September 2004 report of the United States commission on civil rights, entitled "Broken Promises: Evaluating the Native American Health Care System"; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico and other states cannot bear sole

fiscal responsibility for providing adequate health care to their Native American populations; and

WHEREAS, the reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act would provide fiscal and other assistance necessary to improve the health care provided to Native Americans; and

WHEREAS, reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act through fiscal year 2015 could have been accomplished by congress through the passage of S. 1057, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2005 that was introduced on May 17, 2005; and

WHEREAS, a substitute for S. 1057 was reported favorably out of the senate committee on Indian affairs on March 16, 2006 but no further senate action was taken on that bill; and

WHEREAS, reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act through fiscal year 2015 could have been accomplished by congress through the passage of H.R. 5312, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act Amendments of 2006 that was introduced on May 9, 2005; and

WHEREAS, a substitute for H.R. 5312 was reported favorably out of the house committee on resources on June 21, 2006 but no further house action was taken on that bill;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that it urge congress and the president of the United States to prioritize the reauthorization of the

Indian Health Care Improvement Act early in the first session of the one hundred tenth congress; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it support the addition of the city of Albuquerque to the list of demonstration projects in order to support vital health care services serving urban Native Americans; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it support language in a reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to encourage state-Indian health service partnerships to provide eligibility to workers in rural areas; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it support providing access to residential treatment centers for Native American youth and adolescents close to their homes on reservations in light of the alarming rates of substance abuse and suicide within this population in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the president of the United States; the secretary of the United States department of the interior; the secretary of the United States health and human services department; the director of the United States Indian health service; the director of the United States office of management and budget; the majority leader of the United States senate; the speaker of the United States house of representatives; members of the United States senate committee on Indian affairs; members of the United States house of

representatives committee on resources; the president of the Navajo Nation; the speaker of the Navajo Nation council; the president of the Mescalero Apache Tribe; the president of the Jicarilla Apache Nation; the governors of the nineteen Indian pueblos in New Mexico; the members of the New Mexico congressional delegation; the governor; the secretary of health; and the secretary of Indian affairs.