

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO SUBMIT AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE MEDICAID PLAN TO PROVIDE FOR A CONTINUUM OF REHABILITATIVE SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROBLEMS.

WHEREAS, in 2003-2004, New Mexico had the highest rate of past-year illicit drug dependence or abuse among persons twelve years of age or older; and

WHEREAS, also in 2003-2004, New Mexico ranked second in the nation for the rate of persons twelve years of age or older who needed but did not receive treatment for illicit drug use; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico had the fourth highest rate in the nation of past-year alcohol dependence or abuse among persons twelve years of age or older in 2003-2004; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico ranked fifth in the nation for the rate of persons twelve years of age or older who needed but did not receive treatment for alcohol abuse in 2003-2004; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico's alcohol-related chronic liver disease death rate has increased by twenty-four percent over the past two decades, although the rate for the nation as a whole has decreased by twenty-one percent. More generally, alcohol and drug abuse contribute to overall rates of substance abuse-related deaths in New Mexico that have been

among the highest in the nation for the past two decades; and

WHEREAS, nine of the ten leading causes of death in New Mexico are at least partially caused by alcohol, tobacco or other drug use; and

WHEREAS, every dollar invested in substance abuse treatment saves taxpayers seven dollars forty-six cents (\$7.46) in societal costs, and with some outpatient treatment programs, total savings can exceed costs by a ratio of twelve to one; and

WHEREAS, a study of Washington state's medicaid program found that the provision of substance abuse treatment was associated with a reduction in medical expenses of approximately two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) annually. This estimated saving was equal to the cost of treatment and represented approximately thirty-five percent of the annual medicaid expenses incurred by welfare clients with substance abuse problems; and

WHEREAS, nationally, patients' medical costs decreased by thirty percent on average between the year prior to substance abuse treatment intake and the third year following intake. Both medicaid and non-medicaid patients showed average declines of thirty percent in medical costs from the baseline period to the third year following treatment initiation; and

WHEREAS, between 2003 and 2004, a national survey showed

that the cost of treatment or a lack of insurance for treatment were the most common reasons for not receiving treatment. Among those who made an unsuccessful effort to get treatment, over forty percent reported cost or insurance barriers as the reason for not receiving care; and

WHEREAS, in 2005, the governor's interagency substance abuse task force recommended that the state should "[e]nhance use of medicaid funding for substance abuse-related treatment services"; and

WHEREAS, the state is currently spending ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) for substance abuse treatment without receiving federal matching funds;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department be requested to submit an amendment to the state medicaid plan to the federal centers for medicare and medicaid services no later than July 1, 2008 to provide a continuum of rehabilitative services to people with substance abuse problems. The continuum of rehabilitative services outlined in the amendment shall be no less than comparable to the continuum of services provided to people with mental health diagnoses; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the human services department.