

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION TO CONVENE
A GROUP OF EXPERTS TO PLAN FOR STATE-FUNDED, NATIONALLY
ACCREDITED PRIMARY CARE RESIDENCY SLOTS AND ROTATIONS.

WHEREAS, primary care providers form the backbone of
necessary basic and preventive health services in New Mexico;
and

WHEREAS, during the past five decades, there has been a
drastic decrease in the supply of primary care physicians due
to the increase in numbers of specialist physicians trained in
high-cost, high-technology health care at the expense of
health care designed to prevent illness and maintain the
health of individuals and communities; and

WHEREAS, while there are diminishing numbers of primary
care dentists being trained in the United States, there is an
increased demand for dentistry in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, access to preventive and primary health care
services is crucial to providing affordable health care and
health care accessible to more individuals; and

WHEREAS, in most countries where there are universal or
national health care systems, there is a recognition of the
necessity of keeping health care affordable by maintaining a
one-to-one ratio of primary care physicians to specialists;
and

WHEREAS, in the United States, health care costs are increasing dramatically year by year, in part because the ratio of primary care physicians to specialists is closer to twenty primary care physicians to eighty specialists; and

WHEREAS, there is a need in New Mexico for over one hundred fifty primary care physicians, but only around twenty-four primary care physicians are trained in the state every year; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature and the United States congress have recognized the importance of primary care by passing legislation to provide over one hundred forty primary care locations across New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the New Mexico legislature and the United States congress have funded policy improvements, such as training programs for nurse practitioners, physician assistants and family physician residencies, in order to improve access to primary care; and

WHEREAS, primary care centers such as those funded by the New Mexico legislature and by the United States congress should be staffed whenever possible with high-quality health professionals from the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, more medical students may choose primary care if reimbursement formulas and medical education programs were to be changed to reward and produce more primary care physicians;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy commission be requested to convene a task force of experts by June 1, 2008 for the purpose of planning for new or expanded state-funded, nationally accredited primary medical, dental and other residency programs, including rotations in communities where there is a documented underservice and shortage of these services in clinics and hospitals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to examine other conditions impacting provider training decisions and retention factors and then report its recommendation on how these conditions may improve access to primary medical and dental services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its findings and recommendations to the legislative health and human services committee by September 1, 2008; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the chair of the New Mexico health policy commission.