

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING DETENTION CENTERS TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO PREVENT THE ACCIDENTAL DRUG OVERDOSE OF DETAINEES AFTER RELEASE.

WHEREAS, more than three hundred people in New Mexico died in 2007 of accidental drug overdoses, the majority of which were preventable; and

WHEREAS, according to the department of health, New Mexico's prescription opiate and heroin-related drug overdose death rates are significantly higher than the national average; and

WHEREAS, state and local public health agencies have long supported effective overdose prevention programming; and

WHEREAS, naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid overdoses, is a critical component of any effective overdose prevention and response program and has been distributed to people at high risk of overdose in New Mexico since 2001; and

WHEREAS, participants in programs incorporating naloxone report an increased connection to safety and personal health information and resources; and

WHEREAS, the frequency of heroin use decreased among opioid users in a pilot study of naloxone distribution; and

WHEREAS, according to the department of health, about three hundred people reported using naloxone to save lives in

2008 alone; and

WHEREAS, a study published in 2008 found that male prisoners were twenty-nine times more likely to die during the week following release, while female prisoners were sixty-nine times more likely to die during this period, relative to the general population; and

WHEREAS, on December 4, 2008, Amber A. Archibeque, a young woman with a history of heroin addiction, needlessly died in Albuquerque due to a heroin overdose four hours after release from jail; and

WHEREAS, according to a recent report conducted by the federal substance abuse and mental health services administration, an estimated fifty-five thousand New Mexicans need, but are not receiving, treatment for an illicit drug use problem; and

WHEREAS, numerous scientific studies have demonstrated that medication-assisted treatment using methadone or a combination of buprenorphine and naloxone is the most effective treatment for individuals addicted to heroin and other opiates, including such prescription drugs as hydrocodone, oxycodone, morphine, hydromorphone and fentanyl; and

WHEREAS, according to the RAND corporation, every one dollar (\$1.00) invested in substance abuse treatment results in a savings to taxpayers of more than seven dollars (\$7.00)

through reduced societal costs of crime, violence and loss of productivity; and

WHEREAS, according to a report published by the justice policy institute, appropriate substance abuse treatment significantly reduces criminal activity both during and after treatment; and

WHEREAS, pilot programs have been established in several locations around the state that link jail detainees during and after detention to effective, low-threshold substance abuse treatment and to overdose prevention programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that detention centers be requested to form partnerships with local and state public health agencies to increase access to overdose prevention services and substance abuse treatment services for detainees before and after release; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that naloxone and overdose prevention literature be provided to detainees with histories of opioid use before or upon release and that detainees be educated about the risk of relapse and overdose in order to prevent needless loss of lives; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that detention centers ensure that detainees are released in safe locations during daylight hours with adequate access to a telephone and to transportation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that detention centers establish resources that support detainees with substance abuse problems during and after detention, including providing medication-assisted treatment, substance abuse treatment and discharge planning; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the wardens of all of the detention centers in New Mexico, the secretary of health and the governor.