

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR'S WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE NEEDS OF BREASTFEEDING STUDENT-MOTHERS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BREASTFEEDING ACCOMMODATIONS IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS.

WHEREAS, according to ample medical evidence, breastfeeding is one of the most important choices a mother can make to foster health in her child and herself; and

WHEREAS, breastfeeding provides immunological benefits to the child that are only available from human milk; and

WHEREAS, studies published in the medical journal, *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*, and by the New Hampshire department of health and human services show that breastfed babies are healthier than babies who are not breastfed and report fifty percent fewer illnesses, decreased severity of illnesses and reduced overall health care costs; and

WHEREAS, babies who had never been breastfed were shown, in 1999, to incur health care costs that were three hundred thirty-one dollars (\$331) to four hundred seventy-five dollars (\$475) higher than their breastfed counterparts in their first year of life, according to the medical journal, *Pediatrics*; and

WHEREAS, studies show that breastfeeding also reduces the mother's risk of breast, ovarian and cervical cancer,

osteoporosis and urinary tract infections; and

WHEREAS, one study published in the *American Journal of Health Promotion* reports that mothers of children who were breastfed are less than one-half as likely to have a one-day absence from employment than their formula-feeding counterparts; and

WHEREAS, another study published in the *American Journal of Health Promotion* reports that due to fewer child illnesses, breastfeeding mothers take twenty-seven percent fewer days off from employment than non-breastfeeding mothers; and

WHEREAS, the *Journal of Compensation and Benefits*, the *Journal of Business and Psychology* and the medical journal, *Birth: Issues in Perinatal Care*, all report that breastfeeding student-mothers experience increased productivity, improved study concentration and improved morale when they have support for breastfeeding in school; and

WHEREAS, the savings derived from breastfeeding can be considered a low-cost means of improving health for both mothers and babies; and

WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of breastfeeding, many mothers have to give up breastfeeding when they return to work or school; and

WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of breastfeeding in the lives of both student-mothers and their babies, many educational institutions in New Mexico do not offer

opportunities for student-mothers to breastfeed; and

WHEREAS, school environments that facilitate breastfeeding mothers include those that provide private, clean and conveniently located non-bathroom space and flexible break times from classes for the purposes of breastfeeding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor's women's health advisory council convene a task force for the purpose of assessing the level of support that New Mexico student-mothers have and make recommendations for improving the breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among student-mothers in the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor's women's health advisory council collaborate with the department of health, the higher education department, the public education department, the children, youth and families department, the New Mexico health policy commission, La Leche league of New Mexico and any other agencies or organizations that may provide insight and expertise in studying this issue and report its findings to the legislative education study committee and the legislative health and human services committee by December 1, 2009; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the director of the governor's women's health advisory council.