

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 23

2 **49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THAT THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION, IN
12 COORDINATION WITH THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE
13 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, FORM AN ADVISORY
14 PANEL TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF UNINTENDED PREGNANCY IN NEW
15 MEXICO AND OFFER POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE THE NUMBERS
16 OF UNPLANNED PREGNANCIES.

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18 WHEREAS, the legislature finds that the rate of unintended
19 pregnancies in New Mexico warrants careful, creative and
20 competent consideration in order to find evidence-based and
21 science-based solutions to preventing and reducing the numbers
22 of unintended pregnancies; and

23 WHEREAS, the legislature acknowledges the steady number of
24 reports indicating that New Mexico's birth rate for teen
25 mothers is among the highest in the country and as much as one
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1 and one-half times the national average and that the number of
2 young women having babies affects the poverty rate in New
3 Mexico; and

4 WHEREAS, the legislature finds that young parents often
5 struggle to find daycare and flexible jobs that accommodate the
6 unexpected schedules of their children; that teen mothers are
7 more likely to be single parents; that women generally earn
8 less than men throughout New Mexico; and that young parents
9 often cut short their education and may find it difficult to
10 provide for their families without public assistance; and

11 WHEREAS, the legislature finds that, as reported by New
12 Mexico voices for children:

13 A. poverty rates are twice as high among women in
14 New Mexico who had their first child as teenagers than among
15 women who had their first child at age twenty or older;

16 B. forty-five percent of Hispanic women who had
17 their first child as teenagers are raising their children in
18 poverty; and

19 C. approximately forty-eight percent of New Mexico
20 teenagers who live with their own minor children live in
21 poverty; and

22 WHEREAS, according to the national campaign to prevent
23 teen and unplanned pregnancy, two-thirds of teen mothers do not
24 receive a high school diploma and only one and one-half percent
25 have a college degree by age thirty; and

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1 WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes that New Mexico's high
2 teen birth rates also reflect the high percentage of teen
3 mothers who have more than one child while they are still in
4 their teens; and

5 WHEREAS, the legislature recognizes the urgency of reports
6 that unintended pregnancies are especially prevalent among
7 financially disadvantaged women and girls; that forty percent
8 of the women in New Mexico are Hispanic while seventy-one
9 percent of births to mothers aged fifteen to seventeen are to
10 Hispanic women; and that since New Mexico is among the poorest
11 states in the country, it is likely to have concentrations of
12 poor women; and

13 WHEREAS, the legislature acknowledges that the economic
14 cost to taxpayers and the financial strain on families of
15 unplanned pregnancy is substantial and much higher in New
16 Mexico than in other parts of the United States and other
17 developed nations;

18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
19 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy
20 commission be urged to create and convene an unintended
21 pregnancy advisory panel charged with making recommendations to
22 the legislature and the governor for a comprehensive plan to
23 reduce unintentional pregnancies based on evidence- and
24 science-based solutions for the prevention and reduction of
25 unplanned pregnancies; and

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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the advisory panel be composed
2 of experts from the human services department and department of
3 health; public and behavioral health care providers; school-
4 based health professionals; legal and policy experts; and
5 community representatives; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the unintended pregnancy
7 advisory panel study and review New Mexico-specific data on
8 unintended pregnancies compared with national statistics and
9 analyze the availability of family planning services, education
10 and information throughout New Mexico, including an analysis of
11 the availability of private insurance and public benefits
12 programs to provide family planning services and information
13 and to make recommendations regarding how to maximize federal
14 funding streams for those services, and how to ensure access to
15 such services in rural and underserved communities; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the unintended pregnancy
17 advisory panel recommend to the legislature a comprehensive
18 strategic plan for reducing and preventing the number of
19 unplanned pregnancies in New Mexico and undertake other
20 activities and make other recommendations related to the
21 reduction and prevention of unintended pregnancies; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the unintended pregnancy
23 advisory panel make an interim report of its findings to the
24 second session of the forty-ninth legislature and issue a final
25 report of its recommendations by October 1, 2010 for

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1 consideration in the first session of the fiftieth legislature;
2 and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
4 transmitted to the secretary of health, the secretary of human
5 services and the New Mexico health policy commission.

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