

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP
3 TO STUDY THE CAUSES AND INCIDENCE OF CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE
4 PULMONARY DISEASE AND REQUESTING THE WORKING GROUP TO
5 RECOMMEND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION AND
6 MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE,
7 INCLUDING INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ITS CAUSES AND THE
8 IMPORTANCE OF EARLY DIAGNOSIS.

9
10 WHEREAS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a
11 largely preventable incurable disease that, if diagnosed, can
12 be treated; and

13 WHEREAS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease includes
14 chronic bronchitis and emphysema, which make emptying air
15 from the lungs progressively more difficult, and is
16 characterized by symptoms such as cough, mucus production,
17 wheezing and breathlessness; and

18 WHEREAS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease may be
19 unrecognized in its early stages as the quality of life for a
20 person suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
21 gradually diminishes as the disease progresses; and

22 WHEREAS, while cigarette smoking is the primary risk
23 factor for developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease,
24 there are other risk factors, such as exposure to air
25 pollution, including smoke from poorly ventilated wood stoves

1 and the burning of biomass; secondhand smoke; occupational
2 dusts and chemicals; a history of childhood infections;
3 heredity; and socioeconomic status; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2008, more than thirteen million adults in
5 the United States had chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
6 that had been diagnosed, with an equal number remaining
7 undiagnosed, according to the American lung association; and

8 WHEREAS, the national center for health statistics of
9 the federal centers for disease control and prevention cites
10 chronic lower respiratory disease, which includes chronic
11 obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma, as the
12 third-leading cause of death in the United States in 2008;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, research has consistently shown that patients
15 with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease have exceedingly
16 high rates of hospitalization and emergency room visits,
17 which resulted in one million five hundred thousand emergency
18 room visits and seven hundred twenty-six thousand
19 hospitalizations in 2000; and

20 WHEREAS, the American lung association reports that the
21 average chronic obstructive pulmonary disease hospitalization
22 stay lasts slightly longer than four days and costs seventeen
23 thousand sixty-six dollars (\$17,066); and

24 WHEREAS, a recent study of more than eleven million
25 medicare beneficiaries found chronic obstructive pulmonary

1 disease to be the third most common cause of
2 rehospitalization within thirty days of discharge; and

3 WHEREAS, the cost of chronic obstructive pulmonary
4 disease in terms of medical expense and lost productivity
5 totals fifty billion dollars (\$50,000,000,000) per year in
6 the United States, according to the national heart, lung, and
7 blood institute; and

8 WHEREAS, the death rate for women with chronic
9 obstructive pulmonary disease has recently surpassed that of
10 men, reflecting increased smoking rates among women, which
11 began in the 1940s, with women over the age of forty being
12 the fastest-growing segment of the population developing this
13 irreversible disease; and

14 WHEREAS, the United States department of health and
15 human services has launched a "Healthy People 2020"
16 initiative that includes chronic obstructive pulmonary
17 disease prevention objectives that incorporate prevention and
18 treatment strategies to reduce emergency department
19 admissions, hospitalizations and deaths and that also focus
20 on earlier diagnosis;

21 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
22 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of health be requested
23 to convene a working group composed of representatives of the
24 department of health, the human services department, the
25 Indian affairs department, the university of New Mexico

1 health sciences center, the American lung association, the
2 New Mexico thoracic society, the Lovelace respiratory
3 research institute and public and private third-party payors
4 to study the causes and incidence of chronic obstructive
5 pulmonary disease in New Mexico; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be
7 requested to make recommendations with respect to prevention
8 programs and best practices for early diagnosis and
9 management of the disease to reduce costly emergency
10 department admissions and hospitalizations and to investigate
11 sources of funding for related initiatives and research; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be
13 requested to consider ways to increase public awareness of
14 the causes of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and of
15 the importance of early diagnosis; and

16 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be
17 requested to report its findings and recommendations to the
18 legislative health and human services committee by
19 November 1, 2012; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
21 transmitted to the secretary of health. _____

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