

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO SUPPORT
3 FEDERAL LEGISLATION TO STRENGTHEN FAMILIES AND TO KEEP MORE
4 CHILDREN IN SAFE HOMES AND OUT OF FOSTER CARE.

5
6 WHEREAS, children are the most vulnerable members of
7 society and deserve to be loved, protected and nurtured; and

8 WHEREAS, the Annie E. Casey foundation's annual KIDS
9 COUNT report ranked New Mexico either last or next to last
10 among the fifty states in child well-being; and

11 WHEREAS, on any given day, two thousand five hundred
12 children need foster care in New Mexico, according the
13 children, youth and families department; and

14 WHEREAS, while foster care fills a vital role, families
15 can be strengthened by keeping children out of foster care
16 and placing them in the least-restrictive, most family-like
17 setting appropriate to their needs and by reducing
18 inappropriate group home placements; and

19 WHEREAS, lawmakers are looking for ways to protect
20 children by focusing on the root of the problem and directing
21 resources to preventive services; and

22 WHEREAS, in January 2017, House Resolution 253, the Family
23 First Prevention Services Act of 2017, was introduced in the
24 United States congress with bipartisan support; and

25 WHEREAS, the Family First Prevention Services Act of

1 2017 strengthens families and reduces inappropriate foster
2 care placements by:

3 A. giving states flexibility to use federal foster
4 care dollars to provide up-front, evidence-based prevention
5 services, such as parent training and individual and family
6 therapy, to prevent inappropriate foster care placements and
7 improve outcomes for children and parents;

8 B. ensuring that more foster children are placed
9 with families by ending federal reimbursement when states
10 inappropriately place children in non-family settings, such
11 as group homes or congregate facilities;

12 C. keeping children safe by reauthorizing the
13 regional partnership grant program, which provides funding to
14 state and local evidence-based services aimed at preventing
15 child abuse and child neglect due to parental substance
16 abuse;

17 D. reducing the amount of time foster children
18 wait to be adopted or placed with relatives or foster parents
19 across state lines by encouraging states to replace their
20 outdated child placement systems with a more efficient
21 electronic system; and

22 E. supporting family members who unexpectedly
23 assume responsibility for a child by providing important
24 caregiver resources and eliminating unnecessary paperwork;
25 and

1 WHEREAS, the congressional budget office preliminarily
2 estimates that the cost of up-front prevention services to
3 strengthen families would be more than fully offset by
4 reducing inappropriate group home placements and the short
5 delay in providing additional funding to states for adoption
6 assistance to allow the United States government
7 accountability office review to be completed; and

8 WHEREAS, over the long term, providing evidence-based
9 prevention services has been shown to reduce the need for
10 costly, long-term foster care and to improve outcomes for
11 children and families;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
13 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that New Mexico's congressional
14 delegation be requested to support House Resolution 253, the
15 Family First Prevention Services Act of 2017, for the benefit
16 of New Mexico children and families; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
18 transmitted to members of the New Mexico congressional
19 delegation.

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