

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 9

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2023

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT TO
CONVENE A CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES TASK FORCE TO STUDY AND
DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE DEPARTMENT'S REMOVAL AND
REUNIFICATION POLICIES AND PRACTICES.

WHEREAS, numerous factors influence the children, youth
and families department's or law enforcement's decision to
remove a child from the child's home or to reunify the child
with family; and

WHEREAS, removing a child from a parent, even for a short
period of time, can have long-term harmful effects on the child
due to the trauma of parental separation; and

WHEREAS, the high rate of short-term placements by the
children, youth and families department may be related to
systemic factors such as high turnover rates among caseworkers

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1 and high caseloads;

2 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
3 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of children, youth and
4 families be requested to convene and administratively support a
5 child protective services task force of experts to study and
6 report to the governor and the legislature its recommendations;
7 to consider the work of the 2019 child protective services task
8 force; and to consult with the Children's Code task force; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the child protective services
10 task force's study include:

11 A. recommendations made by earlier studies of the
12 children, youth and families department's child protective
13 services system;

14 B. the use and efficacy of short-term foster care
15 placements and the long-term consequences of short-term foster
16 care;

17 C. best practices and evidence-based programs and
18 the efficacy of current state services and programs related to
19 child protective services; and

20 D. recruitment and retention of staff, particularly
21 caseworkers; the supervisory roles and responsibilities; and
22 the total caseload of the children, youth and families
23 department, district offices and individual caseworkers; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the child protective services
25 task force present interim reports to the legislative health

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1 and human services committee and the legislative interim
2 committee that addresses courts, corrections and justice issues
3 and provide a final report with recommendations for statutory
4 and other changes to the governor and the legislature by
5 November 1, 2024; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
7 transmitted to the governor and the secretary of children,
8 youth and families.