

A JOINT MEMORIAL
REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO INCLUDE AN
OUTPATIENT PHARMACY BENEFIT IN THE MEDICARE PROGRAM

WHEREAS, the medicare program covers the costs of outpatient physician visits, but does not cover the cost of prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, senior citizens incur an average of four hundred fifty dollars (\$450) per month in out-of-pocket prescription drug costs; and

WHEREAS, out-of-pocket spending for prescription drugs is especially burdensome for low-income seniors who spend, on average, about half of their monthly income on health care costs; and

WHEREAS, medicare beneficiaries who want to purchase individual supplemental coverage (medigap) may not be able to afford the monthly premiums, or may be able to afford only medigap coverage that does not include prescription drug coverage; and

WHEREAS, many senior citizens who are needy do not qualify for medicaid coverage; and

WHEREAS, many senior citizens in New Mexico and in the United States have lost their medicare health maintenance organization coverage, thereby losing their prescription drug coverage; and

WHEREAS, senior citizens with prescription drug

coverage find that the limitations to their coverage such as co-payments, deductibles and annual ceilings on drug expenditures mean that they still incur significant out-of-pocket expenditures that they are unable to bear; and

WHEREAS, access to pharmaceuticals is essential to the maintenance of health and prevention of health complications for many medicare beneficiaries;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the congress of the United States be requested to include an outpatient pharmacy benefit in the medicare program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be sent to each member of New Mexico's congressional delegation. =