

A MEMORIAL

H
M

REQUESTING THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE NEW MEXICO
HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION TO CONVENE A STATE DENTAL EDUCATION
SUMMIT IN COOPERATION WITH THE NEW MEXICO DENTAL ASSOCIATION TO
ASSESS THE ADEQUACY OF CURRENT DENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO
MEET THE NEEDS AND DESIRES OF STATE RESIDENTS AND STUDENTS.

1
P
a
g
e
1

WHEREAS, the health professions bureau within the health resources and services administration of the United States department of health and human services has found that New Mexico ranks forty-ninth among the states in the number of dentists per one hundred thousand population compared to New Mexico rankings of thirty-third for physicians and forty-fourth for nurses in the same survey; and

WHEREAS, the state does not have a dental school; and

WHEREAS, the state has chosen instead to rely on membership in the western interstate commission for higher education to assist and enable a limited number of New Mexico students to attend dental education programs at commission member out-of-state institutions by providing loans for service approximately equal to the average difference between resident and nonresident tuition at those institutions; and

WHEREAS, the number of dentists who have chosen to locate in New Mexico is insufficient to meet the state's needs; and

WHEREAS, the state has had only one dental hygiene education program, which has remained the same size as the initial program established in 1963 of twenty-four students per year at the university of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, in the fall of 2001, a second program was established at San Juan

college in Farmington, which attracted two hundred applicants for twelve openings and admitted its first students for the 2001-2002 academic year; and

WHEREAS, statewide access to dental care could be significantly improved if additional dental education programs were available to qualified students throughout the state; and

WHEREAS, emphasis must be placed on the recruitment and retention of dentists and allied dental personnel to meet the state's needs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that a dental education summit be held during the summer of 2003 to assess the state's needs and demands for accredited dentist, dental hygiene, dental assistant and other dental office education programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the commission on higher education and the New Mexico health policy commission be requested to cooperate with the New Mexico dental association in sponsoring and conducting a dental education summit and to invite representatives of the department of health, the New Mexico board of dental health care, the human services department, the community college dental education coalition, the New Mexico association of community colleges, the New Mexico dental hygienists' association and the New Mexico dental assistants association and the appropriate officials of the university of New Mexico and San Juan college dental education programs, other interested parties and the general public to participate in the summit; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the dental education summit be presented to the governor, the

H
M

1
P
a
g
e

2

legislative finance committee, the members of the legislature and the New Mexico congressional delegation by October 1, 2003; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the commission on higher education, the New Mexico health policy commission and the New Mexico dental association.

H
M

1
P
a
g
e

3