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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8

46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2004

INTRODUCED BY

Dede Feldman

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING AN EXAMINATION OF THE POTENTIAL EFFECTS AND METHODS
OF PERMITTING BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS TO BUY HEALTH
INSURANCE WITH A PUBLIC PURCHASING COLLABORATIVE.**

**WHEREAS, there is no single domestic issue more important
to citizens in New Mexico and across the country than health
care, health care access and affordable health insurance; and**

**WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico is in the process of
implementing special programs to assist the uninsured, and the
legislature is considering measures to strengthen collaborative
insurance purchasing efforts in New Mexico; and**

**WHEREAS, the state permits and encourages insurance
purchasing cooperation between several public bodies, including
the state public school insurance authority, the Albuquerque
public school insurance authority, the general services**

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1 department and the retiree health care authority; and

2 WHEREAS, New Mexico's over four hundred thousand uninsured
3 do not have adequate access to the appropriate health care that
4 allows persons to avoid using the emergency room for primary
5 care; and

6 WHEREAS, the state and its taxpayers are legitimate and
7 necessary negotiators in the financing of health insurance; and

8 WHEREAS, premiums for health care insurance and health
9 care costs continue to account for an ever-increasing share of
10 both employers' and employees' incomes; and

11 WHEREAS, small business taxpayers are severely burdened
12 with multiple paperwork and reporting requirements by
13 governmental entities; and

14 WHEREAS, these same businesses are required to invest time
15 and to buy services to meet these extensive requirements and
16 are required to pay taxes, fees and assessments to each of
17 these various governmental entities; and

18 WHEREAS, these same businesses are the backbone of their
19 communities, participating in many civic, fraternal and
20 business organizations that volunteer time and money to improve
21 life for their fellow citizens; and

22 WHEREAS, businesses wanting to attract and retain high-
23 quality employees need to be able to afford to offer health
24 insurance as an employment benefit; and

25 WHEREAS, a stronger collaborative health insurance

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1 purchasing effort by state governmental entities provides an
2 excellent vehicle for containing growth in costs; and

3 WHEREAS, such an effort also provides an excellent
4 opportunity to study the potential effects and methods of
5 authorizing private participation in public purchase of health
6 insurance;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
8 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department and the
9 New Mexico health policy commission, with the cooperation of
10 the insurance division of the public regulation commission and
11 the risk management division of the general services
12 department, study the potential effects and methods of
13 authorizing private businesses and individuals to join a public
14 health insurance purchasing collaborative; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this examination address the
16 impact on the number of uninsured New Mexicans, the growth in
17 health insurance costs, the effects on the business community
18 and the effects on the private group and individual insurance
19 markets in the state; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that there be input from interested
21 individuals, representatives from small businesses, business
22 groups, public employers, employee groups and health care
23 advocates; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the final report, including
25 legislative recommendations, be presented to the New Mexico

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1 legislative council, the legislative health and human services
2 committee and the legislative finance committee at their
3 respective December 2004 meetings; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
5 transmitted to the human services department, the New Mexico
6 health policy commission, the general services department, the
7 interagency benefits advisory committee, the insurance division
8 of the public regulation commission, the New Mexico legislative
9 council, the legislative health and human services committee
10 and the legislative finance committee.

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