SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 77

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

INTRODUCED BY

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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION TO CONDUCT A
STUDY ON HEALTH CARE EXPENDITURES AND REFORM OPTIONS.

WHEREAS, "health care" encompasses more than coverage,
access and delivery; it also includes primary and preventive
care, nutrition and exercise; and

WHEREAS, the viability of the health care industry is as
much a part of economic development as new and higher-paying
jobs; and

WHEREAS, health insurance premiums have risen at a rate
that outpaces general inflation; and

WHEREAS, rising health care costs affect all New Mexicans;
and

WHEREAS, the lack of health insurance coverage for so many
New Mexicans results in a social and economic burden for the

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1   affected families, employers, health care providers and the

2   state of New Mexico; and

3   WHEREAS, increasing numbers of businesses cannot afford to

4   provide health care coverage for their employees; and

5   WHEREAS, rising health care costs impact the cost of

6   workers' compensation, automobile and malpractice insurance

7   premiums; and

8   WHEREAS, as health care costs continue to increase, the

9   number of uninsured and uncompensated New Mexicans will

10   continue to rise; and

11   WHEREAS, losses from uncompensated care could be reduced

12   if insurance were provided to the uninsured; and

13   WHEREAS, the legislature is currently faced with the

14   dilemma of having to fund a variety of important health

15   programs, including medicaid, state employee, teacher and

16   retiree health benefits; public health initiatives; and

17   prescription drugs, at a time of rising costs and limited

18   general funds; and

19   WHEREAS, over the years, the legislature and the executive

20   have established numerous programs to address the issues of

21   health care cost, coverage and access; and

22   WHEREAS, despite these efforts, the problems of coverage,

23   access and cost continue to confront New Mexico; and

24   WHEREAS, the continuously increasing cost of health care

25   and the large numbers of uninsured New Mexicans necessitate the

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1   state considering a wide range of new approaches to addressing

2   these serious problems; and

3   WHEREAS, there are many options for reducing the number of

4   uninsured, from coverage through a single program to insurance-

5   market and employment-based reforms; and

6   WHEREAS, the challenge to policymakers is to select the

7   option or options that will reduce the number of uninsured and

8   control rising health care costs; and

9   WHEREAS, the New Mexico health policy commission is the

10   agency designated to collect and evaluate health data and make

11   policy recommendations;

12   NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

13   STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy

14   commission be requested to conduct a comprehensive study to

15   determine current and projected health expenditures in New

16   Mexico that will serve as a base line for proposals for dealing

17   with expenditures and reform options; and

18   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study look at several

19   alternative health care coverage models and analyze the impact

20   of these models on health care expenditures and the number of

21   uninsured; and

22   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico health policy

23   commission be requested to report its findings to the

24   legislative health and human services committee at its October

25   2004 meeting; and

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1   BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be

2   transmitted to the New Mexico health policy commission.

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