

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THAT THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A SYSTEM FOR DETERMINING THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS AND HOW TO DELIVER THE NECESSARY SERVICES TO THAT POPULATION.

WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders are neurobiological disorders that interfere with the normal development of communication and social interaction skills; and

WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders are the second most common type of developmental disabilities and are seen in all ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, autism spectrum disorders are the fastest-growing developmental disability, with an annual cost of ninety billion dollars (\$90,000,000,000); and

WHEREAS, the cost of lifelong care for an individual with an autism spectrum disorder may be reduced by two-thirds with early diagnosis and intervention; and

WHEREAS, early autism spectrum disorder diagnosis and intervention is instrumental in determining success; and

WHEREAS, a child up to age three may receive an interdisciplinary diagnosis through the department of health's family, infant, toddler program; and

WHEREAS, the center for development and disability at the university of New Mexico health sciences center began its interdisciplinary clinic in 1993 to provide autism spectrum disorders diagnoses; and

WHEREAS, because of a lack of funding, the waiting list for the center for development and disability interdisciplinary clinic is as long as eighteen months, which further delays appropriate intervention; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has no system to determine the number of individuals with autism spectrum disorders, making it difficult to determine the amount of funding needed to develop and deliver necessary services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative health and human services committee study the feasibility of establishing a system to determine the number and protect the confidentiality of individuals with autism spectrum disorders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative health and human services committee study how to deliver the necessary services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the legislative health and human services committee study the feasibility of the center for development and disability, the department of health's family, infant, toddler program, the public education department and the legislative education study committee

collaborating to develop a "one-stop shop" to coordinate all necessary autism spectrum disorders specialists to evaluate a child in one setting and to develop a comprehensive plan of action for early intervention; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the New Mexico legislative council, the center for development and disability, the department of health, the public education department and the legislative education study committee.