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A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE DISPARITIES AMONG RACIAL, ETHNIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC GROUPS IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, national studies have found that minority women as a group are in poorer health and use fewer health services than Caucasian women; and

WHEREAS, many minority women face substantial social, economic, cultural, linguistic and other barriers to reaching optimal health; and

WHEREAS, many minority women are less likely to receive prenatal care in the first trimester of pregnancy; and

WHEREAS, minority women experience dramatically higher maternal and infant mortality rates; and

WHEREAS, minority women are disproportionately affected by sexually transmitted diseases, including human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome, but receive inadequate care; and

WHEREAS, many low-income women face substantial barriers, such as lack of health insurance, that prevent them from receiving regular and necessary medical attention, especially preventative screening for reproductive diseases; and

WHEREAS, disparities in health are commonly attributed

1 to differences in income and access to medical services; and

2 WHEREAS, minority and low-income women are not sharing  
3 in the health improvements seen in the general population,  
4 and it is likely that here in New Mexico they are also not  
5 benefiting from reproductive health care services that could  
6 improve their health, longevity and quality of life;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
8 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be  
9 requested to conduct and complete a study of racial, ethnic  
10 and socioeconomic disparities in reproductive health care in  
11 New Mexico; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include, among  
13 other topics determined by the department of health to be  
14 relevant, an examination of the disparities in use of and  
15 access to reproductive health services, including family  
16 planning services, abortion and treatment and prevention  
17 services for sexually transmitted diseases, human  
18 immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency  
19 syndrome, as well as an examination of the incidence of  
20 infant and maternal mortality, sexually transmitted diseases,  
21 human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immune deficiency  
22 syndrome and diseases affecting the reproductive system; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study also examine the  
24 gaps in delivery of reproductive health services, including a  
25 review of all services provided by all state agencies to

1 minority or low-income women, and identify strategies to  
2 eliminate gaps in service and disparities found to exist in  
3 service provision to minority or low-income women; and

4 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study identify federal  
5 funds available from any federal source, including the  
6 national institutes of health, the centers for disease  
7 control and prevention and the health resources and services  
8 administration, that can be used to develop surveillance  
9 systems or research risk factors and prevention strategies,  
10 and upon identifying available funding sources, that the  
11 department of health use its best efforts to obtain those  
12 funds for the purposes of this memorial; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a report be presented by the  
14 department of health to the interim legislative health and  
15 human services committee no later than October 2006,  
16 including the findings, conclusions and recommendations of  
17 the department of health's study of the racial, ethnic and  
18 socioeconomic disparities in reproductive health care; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of the study be  
20 transmitted to the library of the legislative council service  
21 and members of the interim legislative health and human  
22 services committee and be made available to the public; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
24 transmitted to the secretary of health. \_\_\_\_\_