

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 12

**48TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2008**

INTRODUCED BY

Edward C. Sandoval

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION AND THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER TO STUDY THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF A DENTAL SCHOOL IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is facing a shortage of dentists,  
being ranked forty-ninth in the nation in dentists per capita  
for the year 2000, according to the United States department of  
health and human services; and

WHEREAS, in the year 2000, six hundred sixteen dentists  
and five hundred sixty dental hygienists practiced in the  
state, reflecting approximately thirty-four dentists per one  
hundred thousand population, well below the national rate of  
approximately sixty-four dentists per one hundred thousand  
population; and

WHEREAS, the number of dentists in New Mexico increased by  
.171102.1

underscored material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete

underscoring material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete

1 only two percent between the years 1991 and 2000, while the  
2 state's population grew by eighteen percent; and

3 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, two counties have no dentists,  
4 four counties have only one dentist and six counties have only  
5 two dentists; and

6 WHEREAS, the most underserved populations in New Mexico  
7 for oral health care are rural and low-income persons; and

8 WHEREAS, one impediment to dental care access is the lack  
9 of dental profession diversity, with only six and eight-tenths  
10 percent of dentists and only eleven and seven-tenths percent of  
11 dental students, nationally, being members of underrepresented  
12 minority groups; and

13 WHEREAS, the oral health care needs of New Mexico could  
14 be met by the establishment of a dental school in the state  
15 that focuses on education, outreach and research; and

16 WHEREAS, the benefits of having a dental school in the  
17 state include increased access to dental and oral health  
18 services in all parts of the state, comprehensive medical and  
19 dental clinics, economic development from an increased oral  
20 health workforce and a more diverse oral health workforce; and

21 WHEREAS, a dental school study would determine the  
22 appropriate model to use in establishing a dental school, such  
23 as a patient-centered delivery system that provides services to  
24 community-based patient care centers; and

25 WHEREAS, a dental school study should use the "pipeline,

.171102.1

underscored material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete

1 profession and practice: community-based dental education"  
2 program model, which is the result of a collaborative effort  
3 among fifteen dental schools in the United States; and

4 WHEREAS, the "pipeline" program model provides  
5 disadvantaged populations with access to dental care, increases  
6 the diversity of the dental workforce and gives dental students  
7 and dental resident doctors clinical experience in patient-  
8 centered community health care facilities; and

9 WHEREAS, a dental school study should have as its goals  
10 reduction in the disparity in dental care between populations;  
11 the education of dentists who will provide care to low-income  
12 rural citizens; the development of effective oral health care  
13 delivery systems; the recruitment of dental students from rural  
14 and underserved areas of the state; and the development of a  
15 combined doctor of dental science and master of public health  
16 degree program, with a focus on training to meet the needs of  
17 rural areas; and

18 WHEREAS, a study should also address the economic impact  
19 of a dental school, the number of dentists needed to meet the  
20 need for oral health care in rural areas and the cost of  
21 establishing and maintaining a dental school; and

22 WHEREAS, a dental school in New Mexico would best be  
23 established at the university of New Mexico health sciences  
24 center, and the health sciences center can support a study by  
25 providing expertise on developing a comprehensive dental health

.171102.1

underscored material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete

1 program for practitioners, conducting research on best  
2 practices in dentistry, extending dental services into  
3 underserved areas of the state, administering the accreditation  
4 process for a dental school and creating public-private  
5 partnerships for development of a dental school; and

6 WHEREAS, a study should consider that a dental school in  
7 New Mexico would admit its first class of students in the fall  
8 of 2009, with an enrollment of thirty students per year for the  
9 first four years and a total enrollment of one hundred twenty  
10 students by the year 2013; and

11 WHEREAS, a cost study that was conducted by the university  
12 of North Carolina for a new dental school, using a "pipeline"  
13 program model, indicates that a dental school to meet New  
14 Mexico's oral health needs would require a total capital budget  
15 of forty-six million dollars (\$46,000,000), including costs for  
16 design, planning, physical facilities and equipment and a full,  
17 annual operating budget of approximately ten million dollars  
18 (\$10,000,000) by fiscal year 2012; and

19 WHEREAS, the New Mexico health policy commission, together  
20 with the department of health and other state agencies, is  
21 responsible for developing a comprehensive strategic plan for  
22 health care in New Mexico; and

23 WHEREAS, the comprehensive strategic plan for health care  
24 includes addressing the accessibility of oral health care; and

25 WHEREAS, the New Mexico health policy commission is

.171102.1

underscoring material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete

1 responsible for performing a needs assessment for health  
2 education, among other health care needs, in the state; and

3 WHEREAS, the New Mexico health policy commission is  
4 required by law to respond to legislative requests;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
6 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy  
7 commission and the university of New Mexico health sciences  
8 center be requested to conduct a joint study to determine the  
9 feasibility of establishing a dental school in New Mexico; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study determine a model  
11 for a dental school in New Mexico that will serve the oral  
12 health care needs of New Mexico's diverse populations,  
13 including its rural and low-income persons; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico health policy  
15 commission and the university of New Mexico health sciences  
16 center be requested to submit the dental school study to the  
17 interim legislative health and human services committee by  
18 November 1, 2008; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
20 transmitted to the chair of the legislative health and human  
21 services committee, the secretary of finance and  
22 administration, the secretary of health, the board of regents  
23 of the university of New Mexico and the executive vice  
24 president for health sciences at the university of New Mexico.