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HOUSE MEMORIAL 58

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

Eleanor Chavez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR'S WOMEN'S HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL TO
CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE NEEDS OF BREASTFEEDING
STUDENT-MOTHERS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BREASTFEEDING
ACCOMMODATIONS IN SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS.

WHEREAS, according to ample medical evidence,
breastfeeding is one of the most important choices a mother can
make to foster health in her child and herself; and

WHEREAS, breastfeeding provides immunological benefits to
the child that are only available from human milk; and

WHEREAS, studies published in the medical journal, *Annals
of Behavioral Medicine*, and by the New Hampshire department of
health and human services show that breastfed babies are
healthier than babies who are not breastfed and report fifty
percent fewer illnesses, decreased severity of illnesses and

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1 reduced overall health care costs; and

2 WHEREAS, babies who had never been breastfed were shown,
3 in 1999, to incur health care costs that were three hundred
4 thirty-one dollars (\$331) to four hundred seventy-five dollars
5 (\$475) higher than their breastfed counterparts in their first
6 year of life, according to the medical journal, *Pediatrics*; and

7 WHEREAS, studies show that breastfeeding also reduces the
8 mother's risk of breast, ovarian and cervical cancer,
9 osteoporosis and urinary tract infections; and

10 WHEREAS, one study published in the *American Journal of*
11 *Health Promotion* reports that mothers of children who were
12 breastfed are less than one-half as likely to have a one-day
13 absence from employment than their formula-feeding
14 counterparts; and

15 WHEREAS, another study published in the *American Journal*
16 *of Health Promotion* reports that due to fewer child illnesses,
17 breastfeeding mothers take twenty-seven percent fewer days off
18 from employment than non-breastfeeding mothers; and

19 WHEREAS, the *Journal of Compensation and Benefits*, the
20 *Journal of Business and Psychology* and the medical journal,
21 *Birth: Issues in Perinatal Care*, all report that breastfeeding
22 student-mothers experience increased productivity, improved
23 study concentration and improved morale when they have support
24 for breastfeeding in school; and

25 WHEREAS, the savings derived from breastfeeding can be

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1 considered a low-cost means of improving health for both
2 mothers and babies; and

3 WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of breastfeeding, many
4 mothers have to give up breastfeeding when they return to work
5 or school; and

6 WHEREAS, despite the many benefits of breastfeeding in the
7 lives of both student-mothers and their babies, many
8 educational institutions in New Mexico do not offer
9 opportunities for student-mothers to breastfeed; and

10 WHEREAS, school environments that facilitate breastfeeding
11 mothers include those that provide private, clean and
12 conveniently located non-bathroom space and flexible break
13 times from classes for the purposes of breastfeeding;

14 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
15 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the governor's
16 women's health advisory council convene a task force for the
17 purpose of assessing the level of support that New Mexico
18 student-mothers have and make recommendations for improving the
19 breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among student-
20 mothers in the state; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the governor's women's health
22 advisory council collaborate with the department of health, the
23 higher education department, the public education department,
24 the children, youth and families department, the New Mexico
25 health policy commission, La Leche league of New Mexico and any

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1 other agencies or organizations that may provide insight and
2 expertise in studying this issue and report its findings to the
3 legislative education study committee and the legislative
4 health and human services committee by December 1, 2009; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
6 transmitted to the director of the governor's women's health
7 advisory council.

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