

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF CORRECTIONS TO CONTINUE WORKING WITH THE TASK FORCE APPOINTED TO IMPLEMENT AND DESIGN EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE FEMALE POPULATION IN THE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, the 2008 legislature enacted House Memorial 3 requesting the establishment of a task force to implement the recommendations of Senate Joint Memorial 48, which passed the legislature in 2002; and

WHEREAS, in response to that memorial, the secretary of corrections assembled a task force consisting of the warden of the New Mexico women's correctional facility, the warden of the Camino Nuevo correctional center, representatives from the corrections corporation of America, correctional medical services, the adult probation and parole division of the corrections department, the children, youth and families department, the New Mexico women's justice project, the commission on the status of women, the archdiocese of Santa Fe, the judiciary, central New Mexico community college, a rape crisis center, the second judicial district attorney's office, community practitioners in behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, former female inmates who have completed their sentences, including any probation or parole, and other interested and appropriate parties; and

WHEREAS, much work was accomplished by this task force, including examination of issues related to female inmates and the increasing incarceration and recidivism rates experienced by women; and

WHEREAS, the task force also reviewed the environment, programs, services, policies and procedures at the two female correctional facilities, including processes for intake, classification, screening and assessment, discharge planning, vocational skill development, mental health, behavioral health and substance abuse services, interpersonal violence and trauma, parenting and family connections, visitation, gender-informed training protocols, staff training, sexual misconduct and compliance with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003; and

WHEREAS, the task force began the process of implementing the recommendations of the national institute of corrections; and

WHEREAS, as requested by the memorial, the task force began to develop community collaborations and partnerships for the purpose of the creation of innovative and unique solutions for the female inmate population and to improve the readiness of women to reintegrate back into their communities; and

WHEREAS, such collaborations have been shown to be successful both in New Mexico and throughout the country, despite limited or reduced government resources; and

WHEREAS, the current economic climate requires a continuation of innovative, collaborative partnerships between state agencies and community organizations in order to effectively address the needs of women in prison; and

WHEREAS, one charge adopted by the task force was to pursue recommendations and solutions to implement gender classification and reentry tools; work toward parole violation reduction; implement a controlled release pilot project; enhance reentry procedures and processes; strengthen the relationship with the interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative; expand substance abuse treatment to include medication-assisted therapies; explore alternatives to the use of solitary confinement for women; investigate medicaid enrollment for inmates' children; and explore a pilot work release program for women utilizing advanced technology; and

WHEREAS, the task force also recommended the use of classification and needs assessment designed for females through North Pointe, matching risk and needs with gender-specific programs within the correctional facility through COMPAS; continuing collaboration with community reentry efforts; and continuing collaboration with the governor's prison reform task force; and

WHEREAS, many of the actions proposed by the task force have not yet been implemented;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of corrections be requested to continue working with the task force appointed to implement and design effective solutions for the female population in the corrections system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to continue to pursue the recommendations and solutions already identified and to identify new recommendations and solutions for females in the corrections system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report on its continued progress as well as any new findings, recommendations and solutions to the appropriate interim legislative committee during the 2010 interim; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of corrections, the warden of the women's correctional facility in Grants, the warden of the Camino Nuevo correctional center, the corrections corporation of America, the secretary of children, youth and families, the administrative office of the courts, the second judicial district attorney, the New Mexico women's justice project, the commission on the status of women, the archdiocese of Santa Fe and central New Mexico community college.