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HOUSE MEMORIAL 33

**49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2010**

INTRODUCED BY

Eleanor Chavez

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A UNIVERSITY OF  
NEW MEXICO HOSPITALS URGENT CARE TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE  
POTENTIAL FOR INCREASING ACCESS TO URGENT CARE SERVICES AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO HOSPITALS SYSTEM.

WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals system of  
hospitals and clinics were instituted to serve the public; and

WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals constitute  
the state's largest public hospital system; and

WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico health sciences  
center, including its hospitals, is a teaching, research and  
health care delivery institution known for establishing best  
practices in the field of medicine; and

WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals system  
consists of six inpatient facilities: the main hospital; the

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1 Carrie Tingley hospital; the children's hospital; the  
2 children's psychiatric center; the psychiatric center; and the  
3 cancer center; and

4 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals system  
5 consists of many outpatient facilities, including six family  
6 health clinics; twenty-one centers of excellence; forty-seven  
7 specialty clinics and programs; five family planning clinics;  
8 seven school-based clinics; and a trauma program; and

9 WHEREAS, none of the university of New Mexico hospitals'  
10 many clinics and programs offer evening or weekend hours for  
11 walk-in patients; and

12 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals offer one  
13 urgent care center, which is limited to simple urgent care  
14 issues and charges the same expensive fees as the emergency  
15 room; and

16 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals are a  
17 vital component of the health care delivery system in the  
18 state; and

19 WHEREAS, the university of New Mexico hospitals serve a  
20 disproportionate share of Albuquerque and much of the state's  
21 uninsured and underinsured population; and

22 WHEREAS, much of the state's uninsured and underinsured  
23 population only enter the health care system via visits to the  
24 emergency room; and

25 WHEREAS, currently, the only way most patients may be seen

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1 during evenings and weekends for non-emergency care in the  
2 university of New Mexico hospitals system is to go to one of  
3 the university of New Mexico hospitals' emergency rooms; and

4 WHEREAS, at a university of New Mexico hospital emergency  
5 department, non-emergency cases must wait while emergency cases  
6 are given first priority; and

7 WHEREAS, the volume of patients seen at the university of  
8 New Mexico hospitals' emergency departments is enormous,  
9 significantly due to the addition of non-emergency cases seen  
10 there; and

11 WHEREAS, the cost of seeing patients in an emergency  
12 department is quite high compared to other clinical settings,  
13 which means that patients, the university and other payers  
14 experience much greater medical costs than is likely necessary;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
16 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary  
17 of health be requested to convene a university of New Mexico  
18 hospitals urgent care task force composed of:

19 A. the chief executive officer of the university of  
20 New Mexico hospitals;

21 B. a representative from the committee of interns  
22 and residents at the university of New Mexico hospitals;

23 C. a provider from one of the clinics of the  
24 university of New Mexico hospitals;

25 D. a member of the university of New Mexico

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1 hospital board of trustees;

2 E. a representative from the department of health  
3 with expertise in analyzing data related to health care  
4 delivery and administration;

5 F. two primary care physicians who are neither  
6 employed by nor under contract with the university of New  
7 Mexico health sciences center, but who see a large number of  
8 uninsured patients;

9 G. a representative from the community coalition  
10 for health care access;

11 H. a representative who is a member of and resides  
12 on land belonging to a Native American nation, tribe or pueblo  
13 located wholly or partially within New Mexico; and

14 I. a member of a Native American nation, tribe or  
15 pueblo who lives in an off-reservation urban area and is a New  
16 Mexico resident; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university of New Mexico  
18 hospitals urgent care task force analyze:

19 A. the current population of patients that the  
20 university of New Mexico hospitals see in their emergency  
21 departments, including patients' geographic origins, income and  
22 insurance status and the reasons for seeking care;

23 B. the costs and benefits of opening some of the  
24 clinics in the university of New Mexico hospitals system for  
25 non-emergency, urgent care for walk-in cases; and

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1 C. the potential health outcomes when comparing the  
2 existing situation, in which the university of New Mexico  
3 hospitals system provides care to non-emergency, walk-in cases  
4 on evenings and weekends, with a potentially expanded urgent  
5 care system for seeing non-emergency cases in a timely manner  
6 and on a walk-in basis; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university of New Mexico  
8 hospitals urgent care task force report its findings to the  
9 interim legislative health and human services committee by  
10 November 1, 2010; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
12 transmitted to the secretary of health; the chair and vice  
13 chair of the legislative health and human services committee;  
14 the chief executive officer of the university of New Mexico  
15 hospitals; and the coordinator for the Bernalillo county  
16 community health council.

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