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HOUSE MEMORIAL 1

50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2011

INTRODUCED BY

Danice Picraux

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CREATION OF A STATEWIDE TASK FORCE TO ASSESS,
AND RECOMMEND POLICY OPTIONS TO ADDRESS, FAMILY-FRIENDLY
WORKPLACES FOR NEW MEXICO WOMEN AND FAMILIES.

WHEREAS, economic security is one of the building blocks
necessary for individuals, families and communities to have a
healthy and fulfilling quality of life; and

WHEREAS, to be economically secure means to have
unconditional and consistent access to stable and supportive
employment, quality education, safe housing, safe communities,
nutritious food, health care, social services and social
justice; and

WHEREAS, when individuals, families and communities are
economically secure, they are physically and mentally healthy
and are able to thrive in their own environments; and

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1 WHEREAS, public policy at the local, state and national
2 levels can be created to ensure economically secure lives; and

3 WHEREAS, when individuals, families and communities are
4 not economically secure, negative health outcomes result that
5 affect women and their families, particularly women and
6 families of color; and

7 WHEREAS, according to the workforce solutions department's
8 2010 employee benefits survey, only sixty-six and one-half
9 percent of full-time employees and seventeen and one-half
10 percent of part-time employees were offered paid maternity
11 leave, and only twenty-three and eight-tenths percent of part-
12 time employees were offered paid sick leave; and

13 WHEREAS, despite the economic downturn and the economy's
14 negative impact on some businesses, employers still find it
15 hard to find and retain skilled employees; and

16 WHEREAS, an increasing number of women are the
17 breadwinners for their families; and

18 WHEREAS, women are nearly fifty percent of the nation's
19 work force, and the recession's economic impacts on women are
20 more consequential for the economy than they would have been in
21 the recessions of the last century; and

22 WHEREAS, women face a number of longer-term challenges,
23 including the gender wage gap and female underrepresentation in
24 higher levels of management; and

25 WHEREAS, women are more likely to work part time and have

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1 lower incomes; and

2 WHEREAS, women's health status falls as their family
3 income levels fall; and

4 WHEREAS, women with lower incomes suffer
5 disproportionately from chronic disease, disability, mental
6 health issues and poor health; and

7 WHEREAS, approximately sixteen million seven hundred
8 thousand women are uninsured nationwide; and

9 WHEREAS, uninsured women are more likely to lack adequate
10 access to care and have poorer health outcomes; and

11 WHEREAS, a lack of insurance further heightens economic
12 insecurity; and

13 WHEREAS, race and ethnicity are important determinants of
14 economic security; and

15 WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico ranks third-highest in
16 the nation for the percentage of persons below the federal
17 poverty level; and

18 WHEREAS, New Mexico's median annual income for women is
19 ranked forty-second in the nation; and

20 WHEREAS, fourteen and two-tenths percent of all New
21 Mexicans have incomes below the federal poverty level; and

22 WHEREAS, thirteen and two-tenths percent, or ninety-six
23 thousand one hundred eighty-four, of New Mexico households are
24 headed by a woman, with no husband or male partner present; and

25 WHEREAS, among families with a female-headed household,

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1 thirty-six and two-tenths percent have income below the federal
2 poverty level; and

3 WHEREAS, fifty-one and seven-tenths percent, or
4 twenty-four thousand two hundred thirty-six, of grandparents
5 who live with their grandchildren in New Mexico are primary
6 caretakers, and the majority of these caretaker grandparents
7 are women; and

8 WHEREAS, in New Mexico, women on average earn only seventy
9 percent of what men earn; and

10 WHEREAS, for New Mexican women of color, the earnings gap
11 is significantly higher than average: Hispanic women earn just
12 fifty-five percent of what white men earn and American Indian
13 women earn just fifty-three percent of what white men earn; and

14 WHEREAS, the office of the governor's council on women's
15 health has completed significant research on the impact of
16 economic security on the health of women and families;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
18 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the university
19 of New Mexico's bureau of business and economic research be
20 requested to convene a task force to define family-friendly
21 policies and practices and to study policy options related to
22 paid maternity leave, paid time off, part-time employee
23 benefits, policy incentives for family-friendly small
24 businesses, employment-based child care and other issues that
25 will improve the health of women and families by addressing

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1 economic security; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
3 representatives from the university of New Mexico's bureau of
4 business and economic research, the women's advocacy community,
5 the workforce solutions department, the economic development
6 department, the department of health, the human services
7 department, the children, youth and families department's
8 in-home infant child care program, the chambers of commerce of
9 New Mexico cities with populations of more than sixty thousand
10 individuals, the small business community, an asset-building
11 organization, a business and professional women's association
12 and others that the bureau of business and economic research
13 identifies; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
15 submit an interim report to the legislative health and human
16 services committee by November 1, 2011 and a final report to
17 the legislative health and human services committee by November
18 1, 2012; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the governor, the chair and vice chair of the
21 legislative health and human services committee, the secretary
22 of workforce solutions, the secretary of economic development,
23 the secretary of health, the secretary of human services, the
24 secretary of children, youth and families, the director of the
25 university of New Mexico's bureau of business and economic

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1 research and the chairs of two chambers of commerce of New
2 Mexico cities with populations of more than sixty thousand
3 individuals.

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