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SENATE MEMORIAL 68

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

INTRODUCED BY

Dede Feldman

A MEMORIAL

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF A NEW MEXICO BIRTH DEFECTS SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM AND DECLARING MARCH 10, 2011 "MARCH OF DIMES DAY" IN THE SENATE.

WHEREAS, birth defects are the leading cause of infant death and a major cause of pediatric hospitalizations in the nation; and

WHEREAS, birth defects are common, costly and challenging for parents and society, and some birth defects are preventable; and

WHEREAS, birth defects are a leading cause of infant mortality in New Mexico, accounting for twenty-six percent of infant deaths in the state; and

WHEREAS, each year in New Mexico, approximately six hundred infants, or about one infant out of every forty-five

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1 births, are born with a major birth defect and another thirty
2 to forty infants are born with congenital hearing loss; and

3 WHEREAS, the incidence of cleft lip and palate in New
4 Mexico is rapidly increasing; and

5 WHEREAS, children with conditions such as these often
6 require additional health care and other services to support
7 their growth and development; and

8 WHEREAS, babies born with birth defects have a greater
9 chance of illness and long-term disability than babies without
10 birth defects; and

11 WHEREAS, identifying these children early in their lives
12 enhances the opportunity for them to receive the medical care
13 and early intervention services they need; and

14 WHEREAS, since 2000, birth defects have been a reportable
15 condition in New Mexico; and

16 WHEREAS, the New Mexico birth defects registry was
17 initially established in 1995 in the family health bureau of
18 the department of health and was supported by federal and state
19 funding until 2005; and

20 WHEREAS, there is currently no state or other funding to
21 support the activity required to maintain the birth defects
22 registry; and

23 WHEREAS, although data are being reported, no staff is
24 currently assigned responsibility for retrieving the data and
25 reporting it to the federal centers for disease control and

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1 prevention; and

2 WHEREAS, an adequately funded birth defects surveillance
3 system would allow the state not only to collect and report
4 data regarding birth defects that are reported to the registry,
5 but to interpret the data for the purpose of program and policy
6 development; and

7 WHEREAS, an effective birth defects surveillance system
8 would enable the state to:

9 A. monitor the prevalence of birth defects by
10 identifying clusters that should be investigated;

11 B. target prevention activities;

12 C. assess the impact of screening and prevention
13 activities; and

14 D. link children to necessary services such as case
15 management for those with complex medical needs and health care
16 and early intervention services to maximize the child's
17 development potential; and

18 WHEREAS, the cost to fund a birth defects surveillance
19 system is estimated to be one hundred fifty thousand dollars
20 (\$150,000) per year; and

21 WHEREAS, funding for a birth defects surveillance system
22 would make it possible to increase the number of healthy babies
23 born in New Mexico, leverage federal funds for birth defects
24 research, implement intensive birth defects prevention
25 campaigns and provide education and outreach to New Mexico

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1 families affected by birth defects; and

2 WHEREAS, the effort to raise awareness of the importance
3 of a birth defects surveillance system begins with this senate
4 memorial;

5 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
6 OF NEW MEXICO that it recognize the need for a New Mexico birth
7 defects surveillance system and that March 10, 2011 be declared
8 "March of Dimes Day" in the senate; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
10 transmitted to Brandi Van Pelt, the state director of program
11 services and state director of public affairs for the March of
12 Dimes.