

1 SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 21

2 **50TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2012**

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Richard C. Martinez

5
6
7
8
9
10 A JOINT MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO'S ROBERT WOOD JOHNSON
12 FOUNDATION CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY TO CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY
13 STUDY ON HOW TO ENHANCE AND EXPAND NEW MEXICO'S HARM-REDUCTION
14 SERVICES RELATED TO OPIOID MISUSE AND DEPENDENCY.

15
16 WHEREAS, New Mexico has long been concerned about the high
17 rates of opioid misuse and dependency and the impact on the
18 people of New Mexico; and

19 WHEREAS, the federal centers for disease control and
20 prevention has recently declared the United States to have a
21 crisis and epidemic of opioid abuse and addiction; and

22 WHEREAS, New Mexico is facing opioid overdose death rates
23 of unprecedented proportions; and

24 WHEREAS, New Mexico ranks number one in the country in
25 overdose-related deaths, as reported by the centers for disease

.188601.1

underscored material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

underscoring material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1 control and prevention on November 1, 2011; and

2 WHEREAS, the rate for New Mexico overdose-related deaths
3 is twenty-seven per one hundred thousand population, more than
4 twice the national average; and

5 WHEREAS, nationally, overdose death rates now outnumber
6 traffic fatality rates; and

7 WHEREAS, the department of health's substance abuse
8 epidemiology unit at the university of New Mexico estimates
9 that there were nearly twenty-four thousand adult intravenous
10 drug users in New Mexico in 2006, and others report that number
11 to be as high as fifty thousand; and

12 WHEREAS, the federal substance abuse and mental health
13 services administration recently conducted a review of
14 emergency room visits for nonmedical use of opioid analgesics
15 and found that the number of visits for nonmedical opioid use
16 increased one hundred eleven percent between 2004 and 2008; and

17 WHEREAS, people who use opioids, including heroin and
18 prescription medications, are at risk for health-related harm
19 associated with the use such as blood-borne infections like
20 human immunodeficiency virus and hepatitis C, skin infections
21 at injection sites, venous damage and, ultimately, death due to
22 overdose; and

23 WHEREAS, drug abuse and dependence is a complex issue that
24 requires innovative approaches to harm reduction in drug use;
25 and

.188601.1

underscored material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1 WHEREAS, there are evidence-based approaches that are
2 proven to work in reducing the harm associated with opioid use,
3 including medically supervised injection facilities, opioid
4 overdose reversal antidotes such as naloxone, access to safe
5 syringes and access to medication-assisted treatment, including
6 methadone and buprenorphine; and

7 WHEREAS, individuals suffering from addiction need access
8 to high-quality treatment that is health-focused, yet these
9 individuals remain highly underserved; and

10 WHEREAS, harm reduction strategies for opioid use and
11 overdose can save both lives and money; and

12 WHEREAS, there is a need to enhance the existing system in
13 New Mexico and explore more comprehensive and innovative
14 models; and

15 WHEREAS, medically supervised injection sites are
16 controlled health care settings where drug users can more
17 safely use drugs under clinical supervision, and where they
18 have access to health care, counseling and referral to health
19 and social services, including drug treatment; and

20 WHEREAS, medically supervised injection sites have proven
21 to reduce transmission of blood-borne viruses, prevent overdose
22 fatalities, foster safer injection practices and increase
23 access or referrals to addiction treatment programs, including
24 medication-assisted treatment and detoxification services;
25 savings to taxpayers by reducing societal costs associated with

.188601.1

underscored material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1 costly emergency room visits and increased crime and violence;
2 and a reduction in social harms associated with intravenous
3 drug use, such as public disorder, public intoxication, public
4 injecting of drugs and publicly discarded syringes; and

5 WHEREAS, medically supervised injection sites are best-
6 suited to serve older, long-term users, who are more difficult
7 to reach through more traditional prevention and treatment
8 settings and who often avoid, or have never had contact with,
9 the treatment system; and

10 WHEREAS, worldwide, there are sixty-five safe injection
11 facilities in twenty-seven cities in eight countries, including
12 Vancouver, Canada;

13 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
14 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the university of New Mexico's Robert
15 Wood Johnson foundation center for health policy be requested
16 to develop a task force to conduct a feasibility study to
17 evaluate how to expand and enhance opioid harm-reduction
18 services in New Mexico; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university of New Mexico's
20 Robert Wood Johnson foundation center for health policy explore
21 emerging and novel approaches to opioid harm reduction,
22 including exploring the feasibility of implementing a pilot
23 medically supervised injection site, staffed with medical
24 professionals, to reduce overdose deaths, increase access to
25 health services and treatment and further expand access to safe

.188601.1

underscoring material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 injection equipment to prevent the transmission of human
2 immunodeficiency virus and hepatitis C; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the university of New Mexico's
4 Robert Wood Johnson foundation center for health policy include
5 in its task force and study input from the department of
6 health, the children, youth and families department, the human
7 services department, the interagency behavioral health
8 purchasing collaborative, the behavioral health planning
9 council, the university of New Mexico, the New Mexico public
10 health association, the drug policy alliance, the New Mexico
11 women's justice project, the Navajo AIDS network, the Santa Fe
12 mountain center, casa de salud, New Mexico AIDS services,
13 health care for the homeless, staff from established supervised
14 injection sites, harm-reduction researchers, harm-reduction
15 advocates, people in recovery from opioid addiction and
16 individuals or family members who have experienced an overdose;
17 and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its
19 findings and any legislative recommendations to the interim
20 legislative health and human services committee and other
21 appropriate interim committees by November 1, 2012; and

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
23 transmitted to the university of New Mexico's Robert Wood
24 Johnson foundation center for health policy and to each of the
25 agencies, organizations and individuals named to participate in

.188601.1

underscored material = new
~~[bracketed material] = delete~~

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

the task force.