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SENATE MEMORIAL 57

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

INTRODUCED BY

John M. Sapien

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO STUDY THE CAUSES AND INCIDENCE OF CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE AND REQUESTING THE WORKING GROUP TO RECOMMEND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE, INCLUDING INCREASING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ITS CAUSES AND THE IMPORTANCE OF EARLY DIAGNOSIS.

WHEREAS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a largely preventable incurable disease that, if diagnosed, can be treated; and

WHEREAS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema, which make emptying air from the lungs progressively more difficult, and is characterized by symptoms such as cough, mucus production, wheezing and

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1 breathlessness; and

2 WHEREAS, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease may be
3 unrecognized in its early stages as the quality of life for a
4 person suffering from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
5 gradually diminishes as the disease progresses; and

6 WHEREAS, while cigarette smoking is the primary risk
7 factor for developing chronic obstructive pulmonary disease,
8 there are other risk factors, such as exposure to air
9 pollution, including smoke from poorly ventilated wood stoves
10 and the burning of biomass; secondhand smoke; occupational
11 dusts and chemicals; a history of childhood infections;
12 heredity; and socioeconomic status; and

13 WHEREAS, in 2008, more than thirteen million adults in the
14 United States had chronic obstructive pulmonary disease that
15 had been diagnosed, with an equal number remaining undiagnosed,
16 according to the American lung association; and

17 WHEREAS, the national center for health statistics of the
18 federal centers for disease control and prevention cites
19 chronic lower respiratory disease, which includes chronic
20 obstructive pulmonary disease and asthma, as the third-leading
21 cause of death in the United States in 2008; and

22 WHEREAS, research has consistently shown that patients
23 with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease have exceedingly
24 high rates of hospitalization and emergency room visits, which
25 resulted in one million five hundred thousand emergency room

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1 visits and seven hundred twenty-six thousand hospitalizations
2 in 2000; and

3 WHEREAS, the American lung association reports that the
4 average chronic obstructive pulmonary disease hospitalization
5 stay lasts slightly longer than four days and costs seventeen
6 thousand sixty-six dollars (\$17,066); and

7 WHEREAS, a recent study of more than eleven million
8 medicare beneficiaries found chronic obstructive pulmonary
9 disease to be the third most common cause of rehospitalization
10 within thirty days of discharge; and

11 WHEREAS, the cost of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
12 in terms of medical expense and lost productivity totals fifty
13 billion dollars (\$50,000,000,000) per year in the United
14 States, according to the national heart, lung, and blood
15 institute; and

16 WHEREAS, the death rate for women with chronic obstructive
17 pulmonary disease has recently surpassed that of men,
18 reflecting increased smoking rates among women, which began in
19 the 1940s, with women over the age of forty being the fastest-
20 growing segment of the population developing this irreversible
21 disease; and

22 WHEREAS, the United States department of health and human
23 services has launched a "Healthy People 2020" initiative that
24 includes chronic obstructive pulmonary disease prevention
25 objectives that incorporate prevention and treatment strategies

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1 to reduce emergency department admissions, hospitalizations and
2 deaths and that also focus on earlier diagnosis;

3 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
4 OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of health be requested to
5 convene a working group composed of representatives of the
6 department of health, the human services department, the Indian
7 affairs department, the university of New Mexico health
8 sciences center, the American lung association, the New Mexico
9 thoracic society, the Lovelace respiratory research institute
10 and public and private third-party payors to study the causes
11 and incidence of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in New
12 Mexico; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested
14 to make recommendations with respect to prevention programs and
15 best practices for early diagnosis and management of the
16 disease to reduce costly emergency department admissions and
17 hospitalizations and to investigate sources of funding for
18 related initiatives and research; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested
20 to consider ways to increase public awareness of the causes of
21 chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and of the importance of
22 early diagnosis; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested
24 to report its findings and recommendations to the legislative
25 health and human services committee by November 1, 2012; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of health.