

1 SENATE MEMORIAL 136

2 **52ND LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2015**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO APPOINT A TASK
12 FORCE TO PREPARE LEGISLATION IMPLEMENTING DENTAL THERAPY IN THE
13 STATE.

14
15 WHEREAS, there is a dental health care services shortage
16 throughout most of New Mexico; and

17 WHEREAS, the federal health resources and services
18 administration's February 2015 report stated that New Mexico
19 will have a dentist shortage of one hundred ninety-five
20 dentists and a surplus of two hundred ninety-one dental
21 hygienists in 2025; and

22 WHEREAS, people living in poverty and in rural communities
23 are much less likely to receive good oral health care; and

24 WHEREAS, poor oral health is linked with multiple health
25 problems, including adverse pregnancy outcomes, respiratory

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1 disease, cardiovascular disease and diabetes; and

2 WHEREAS, nontreatment of dental caries may be associated
3 with inappropriate use of emergency room care, resulting in
4 higher health care costs and incomplete care; and

5 WHEREAS, the 2013 New Mexico health care workforce
6 committee, made up of experts in health care, health care work
7 force and state health policy, issued a report that concluded
8 that New Mexico does not have enough dental providers to meet
9 current or future demand; and

10 WHEREAS, the states of Alaska, Maine and Minnesota, as
11 well as the United Kingdom and New Zealand, have established
12 the practice of dental therapy to address the need for skilled
13 dental health care in urban, rural, frontier and tribal areas;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, the eight northern Indian pueblos council, inc.,
16 and the ten southern pueblo governor's council have both passed
17 resolutions in support of legislation establishing the
18 licensure and practice of dental therapists in the state; and

19 WHEREAS, since 2013, the Navajo Nation has endorsed
20 legislation establishing the licensure and practice of dental
21 therapists in the state; and

22 WHEREAS, the legislative health and human services
23 committee has repeatedly endorsed legislation to license and
24 authorize the practice of dental therapists since 2013; and

25 WHEREAS, the 2013 New Mexico health care workforce

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1 committee report recommended that the legislature revisit the
2 concept of dental therapists as an additional way to provide
3 care to underserved areas of the state; and

4 WHEREAS, after many years of effort, reaching a consensus
5 on legislation has failed, the parties are at an impasse and
6 legislative guidance is necessary;

7 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE
8 OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be
9 requested to establish a "dental therapy task force" to prepare
10 legislation for introduction in the 2016 legislative session
11 establishing the licensure and practice of dental therapists in
12 the state; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the dental therapy task force
14 be requested to present, by October 1, 2015, proposed
15 legislation and oral presentation to the legislative health and
16 human services committee; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of the dental
18 therapy task force include, and be appointed, as follows:

19 A. one member of the New Mexico house of
20 representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of
21 representatives;

22 B. one member of the New Mexico house of
23 representatives, appointed by the house minority floor leader;

24 C. one member of the New Mexico senate, appointed
25 by the president pro tempore of the senate;

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1 D. one member of the New Mexico senate, appointed
2 by the senate minority floor leader;

3 E. six members appointed by the New Mexico
4 legislative council from a list of names provided by the New
5 Mexico dental association;

6 F. three members appointed by the New Mexico
7 legislative council from a list of names provided by the New
8 Mexico dental hygienists' association; and

9 G. three members appointed by the New Mexico
10 legislative council from among the names provided by health
11 action New Mexico; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative
13 council charge the legislative council service with hiring an
14 impartial facilitator that is chosen from lists of candidates
15 provided by the New Mexico dental association, the New Mexico
16 dental hygienists' association and health action New Mexico and
17 with providing administrative support for monthly meetings of
18 the dental therapy task force, beginning in June 2015; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the president pro tempore of the senate; the
21 speaker of the house of representatives; the president of the
22 New Mexico dental association; the president of the New Mexico
23 dental hygienists' association; the executive director of
24 health action New Mexico; and the director of the legislative
25 council service.

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