

**MINUTES
of the
SECOND MEETING
of the
LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**June 5-7, 2024
University of New Mexico
Lobo Rainforest Building, Collaboration Space
101 Broadway Boulevard NE
Albuquerque**

The second meeting of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was called to order by Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino, chair, on Wednesday, June 5, 2024, at 9:01 a.m. in the Collaboration Space of the Lobo Rainforest Building at the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque.

Present

Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino, Chair
Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson, Vice Chair
Rep. Eleanor Chávez
Rep. Jenifer Jones
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez (6/7)

Absent

Sen. David M. Gallegos
Rep. Pamela Herndon
Sen. Martin Hickey

Advisory Members

Rep. John Block (6/6, 6/7)
Rep. Kathleen Cates
Rep. Gail Chasey (6/7)
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary
Rep. Miguel P. García (6/6, 6/7)
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson (6/6)
Sen. Linda M. López
Rep. Stefani Lord
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Sen. Harold Pope (6/6, 6/7)
Sen. Nancy Rodriguez
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
Sen. Bill Tallman (6/5)
Rep. Harlan Vincent

Sen. Katy M. Duhigg
Sen. Siah Correa Hemphill
Rep. Tara Jaramillo
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Rep. Cristina Parajón
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero
Sen. Gregg Schmedes
Rep. Reena Szczepanski

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Zander Dawson, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Andrea Lazarow, Bill Drafter, LCS
Grace Balderamos, Staff, LCS
Michel Rivera, Law Intern, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Wednesday, June 5

Welcome and Introductions (9:01 a.m.)

Senator Ortiz y Pino welcomed everyone to the meeting, and members of the committee and staff introduced themselves.

Welcome to UNM (9:08 a.m.)

James Holloway, provost and executive vice president for academic affairs, UNM, welcomed the committee to UNM. He discussed the history of UNM Rainforest Innovations, a nonprofit corporation created and owned by the UNM Board of Regents. He described UNM Rainforest Innovations as UNM's hub for technology and ideas.

Child Welfare 101 (9:18 a.m.)

Rachel Mercer-Garcia, principal analyst, Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), and Nathan Eckberg, Esq., senior fiscal analyst, LFC, provided an overview of child welfare in New Mexico. They described how the child welfare system is organized and discussed data trends regarding child maltreatment, foster care and child protective services. They noted that New Mexico is the state with the highest rate of adults with adverse childhood experiences. They explained the framework of the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) and discussed the CYFD's budget and appropriations. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=2>.

UNM Child Abuse Response Team (CART) (10:28 a.m.)

Leslie Strickler, D.O., F.A.A.P., professor of pediatrics; section chief, child maltreatment; medical director, CART; and director, SafeCare New Mexico, UNM Health Sciences Center, discussed the expansion of clinical and family support services offered by the UNM CART. She provided an update on the SafeCare New Mexico program by Project ECHO and described UNM's research and scholarly initiatives about child abuse and neglect. Dr. Strickler shared some of her experiences as a child abuse pediatrician and noted that the

fellowship in child abuse pediatrics at the UNM School of Medicine has become accredited. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=3>.

Public Comment (11:38 a.m.)

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

Court-Appointed Special Advocate Program (CASA) Update (1:02 p.m.)

Veronica Montano-Pilch, executive director, New Mexico CASA Association, and Brandie White, program director, Mesilla Valley CASA, explained the role of court-appointed special advocates in the Children's Court, pursuant to Subsection F of Section 32A-1-4 NMSA 1978. They stated that there are one court-run CASA program and 12 independent, nonprofit CASA programs in New Mexico. They described the process of becoming a CASA volunteer and outlined the other specialized support services that CASA staff provide to youth and families. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=4>.

New Mexico Child Advocacy Networks (NMCAN) (1:48 p.m.)

Lorilynn Violanta, co-executive director, NMCAN, provided an overview of NMCAN's mission of building community, promoting equity and developing leadership skills among teenagers and young adults. She introduced a panel of NMCAN youth leaders. Joanna Delaney, youth leader, NMCAN, shared her personal experience growing up in the foster care system. Mia Calle, youth leader, NMCAN, shared her personal experience growing up in transitional living. Yazh Pending, youth leader, NMCAN, shared his personal experience growing up in the child welfare system. They described how their lives have been impacted by protective services. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=5>.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 3:17 p.m.

Thursday, June 6

Reconvene

The meeting reconvened at 9:13 a.m.

Best Practices for Child Welfare Systems (9:14 a.m.)

Joseph E. Ribsam, Jr., director, Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Policy, The Annie E. Casey Foundation, presented about child- and family-serving systems throughout the country

that address child welfare, children's behavioral health and juvenile justice. He explained countrywide trends in child welfare systems and noted that the implementation of comprehensive, statewide, integrated care systems for children's behavioral health has been successful in New Jersey and New Hampshire. Mr. Ribsam emphasized that effective child welfare systems are systems that focus on family well-being. He discussed child welfare workforce retention, the federal Family First Prevention Services Act and juvenile justice reform. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=6>.

Advocating for and Providing Services to Children and Families (10:36 a.m.)

Kriztina Udvardi, M.B.A., president and chief executive officer (CEO), All Faiths Children's Advocacy Center, discussed the expansion of certified community behavioral health clinics throughout the country. She explained that certified community behavioral health clinics are specially designated clinics that provide comprehensive, coordinated behavioral health care, including crisis services, psychological rehabilitation services, treatment planning, various counseling services and targeted case management. She discussed the All Faiths Children's Advocacy Center, including its children's safehouse, family wellness program, training services and placement services. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=7>.

Children's Trust Fund (11:19 a.m.)

Marg Elliston, vice chair, Children's Trust Fund Board of Trustees, and Kim Straus, member, Children's Trust Fund Board of Trustees, provided an update about the Children's Trust Fund Board of Trustees' administration of the Next Generation Fund, outreach and marketing initiatives and recent grant making. They explained how grants from the Children's Trust Fund are awarded. They described the Children's Trust Fund Board of Trustees' collaboration with the CYFD and the Early Childhood Education and Care Department to prevent child abuse and neglect.

Public Comment (11:51 a.m.)

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

Update: CYFD (1:10 p.m.)

Teresa Casados, secretary, CYFD, discussed family services, juvenile justice reform and department updates. She stated that the department is trying to end the practice of children staying in the CYFD office and mentioned that a new facility in Albuquerque has opened and will house 12 male children in need of housing. She described some of the department's challenges, including employee recruitment and retainment and the difficulty of finding foster families. Secretary Casados gave information about the CYFD's child abuse hotline, which is called the "statewide central intake". She provided an update about the federal Comprehensive

Addiction and Recovery Act of 2016 (CARA) program in New Mexico and stated that the CYFD plans to hire a CARA manager.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 4:10 p.m.

Friday, June 7

Reconvene

The meeting reconvened at 9:14 a.m.

Approval of Minutes (9:17 a.m.)

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, and without any objections, the committee approved the minutes of the May 7-8, 2024 meeting.

Kevin S. Update (9:18 a.m.)

Gary Housepian, CEO, Disability Rights New Mexico; Bette Fleishman, executive director, Pegasus Legal Services for Children; Therese Yanan, executive director, Native American Disability Law Center; Sara Crecca, Esq.; and George Davis, M.D., provided an overview of the *Kevin S.* co-neutrals' 2022 annual report and the history of the *Kevin S.* settlement. They discussed corrective action plan pilot projects that were implemented in Dona Ana County and San Juan County to provide community-specific recommendations to the CYFD and Health Care Authority. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=10>.

Community Services (11:28 a.m.)

Robert Chavez, M.A., CEO, Youth Development, Inc., discussed the services and programs offered by Youth Development, Inc., which is one of the largest nonprofit organizations in New Mexico. He stated that Youth Development, Inc. offers trauma-informed programs in early childhood education, family development, behavioral health, education, counseling and employment. Sara Penn, L.M.S.W., chief programs officer, New Day, discussed the youth and family services offered by New Day, such as transitional housing services, shelter services, life skills coaching and youth peer support. Jennifer Thompson, co-executive director, PB&J Family Services, Inc., discussed programs administered by PB&J Family Services, Inc., including parenting classes, a children's peer support group, a juvenile community corrections program and family outreach programs. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=6/5/2024&ItemNumber=11>.

Public Comment (12:23 p.m.)

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

Brainstorming Session (12:50 p.m.)

Senator Ortiz y Pino led the committee in a brainstorming session focused on potential legislation that could address the issues presented to the committee.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 1:14 p.m.