

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION CONDUCT AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE IMPACT ON NEW MEXICO OF THE RISING COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS.

WHEREAS, prescription drug prices are high and rising at a rate twice that of the country's inflation; and

WHEREAS, as many as two hundred eighty-four thousand New Mexicans are without any health insurance coverage, and as many as five hundred thousand New Mexicans may be without any coverage for prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, people who are uninsured pay the highest prices for prescription drugs because they cannot afford insurance, which provides access to discounted drug prices; and

WHEREAS, medicare no longer covers outpatient prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, no in-depth studies have been conducted in New Mexico to identify precisely the number of people without insurance coverage for prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, the relationship between ill health and lack of access to appropriate prescription drugs is generally accepted but unstudied in our state; and

WHEREAS, the impact of the rising cost of prescription drugs may have a direct impact on the health and well-being

of the citizens of New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, the interim legislative health and human services committee this interim heard significant testimony from senior citizens and others that the high cost of prescription drugs causes them to forgo necessary medical care, to violate doctors' orders by taking their drugs less frequently than directed in order to stretch their prescription dollar and to choose between prescription drugs and other basic necessities such as food, clothing or housing in order to afford their medications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy commission be requested to study the impact of the rising cost of prescription drugs in New Mexico, including a targeted survey to identify the populations affected by these prices; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study identify potential solutions to the problem at the state level and an analysis of the cost and impact on access they present; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico health policy commission present its findings and recommendations to the interim legislative health and human services committee at its September 2001 meeting; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be sent to the New Mexico health policy commission.

