

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE LABOR DEPARTMENT TO ESTABLISH A TASK FORCE ON EMPLOYMENT TO EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY OF QUALITY EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FOR NEW MEXICANS WITH DISABILITIES.

WHEREAS, there are more than two hundred five thousand New Mexicans of working age with disabilities, and more than seventy percent of them are unemployed; and

WHEREAS, all New Mexicans are entitled to an opportunity to be gainfully employed and to contribute to society, their community and their personal well-being; and

WHEREAS, our society places a high value on work, but does not provide adequate accessibility for persons with disabilities to participate in the workforce; and

WHEREAS, persons with disabilities often face significant barriers in accessing meaningful and gainful employment opportunities because the support services that many persons with disabilities need to participate in the workforce are lacking; and

WHEREAS, there exist employment services that can offer proven, effective support services to persons with disabilities who seek to actively participate in employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, employed persons with disabilities contribute significantly to the state's economy and tax base; and

WHEREAS, effective and efficient government promotes partnerships and collaboration among state agencies and the private sector to ensure the effective use of resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the labor department be requested to develop an employment task force that will develop a cooperative employment initiative for persons with disabilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that representatives of the department of health, the division of vocational rehabilitation of the state department of public education, the developmental disabilities planning council, the human services department, the governor's committee on the concerns of the handicapped, the commission for the blind, the commission for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, the state agency on aging, the Indian behavioral health council, the governor's mental health planning council, the social security administration, the advisory council to the long-term care and restorative services division of the department of health known as the supported employment council, employer groups that advocate employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, providers of services to persons with disabilities and organizations that advocate for persons with disabilities, and persons with disabilities who are seeking or receiving employment services and family members of those

persons be invited to participate on the task force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to prepare a report identifying the barriers, problems and recommendations for the creation of a coordinated infrastructure system to provide significantly more employment services to persons with disabilities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its findings to an appropriate interim committee of the legislature prior to the second session of the forty-fifth legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the secretaries of labor and health and human services, the superintendent of public instruction, the developmental disabilities planning council, the governor's committee on the concerns of the handicapped, the commission for the blind, the commission for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, the state agency on aging, the Indian behavioral health council, the governor's mental health planning council and the social security administration.