

1 A MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THAT A TASK FORCE BE CONVENED TO STUDY AND  
3 RECOMMEND POLICY CHANGES TO EXPAND THE AVAILABILITY OF  
4 RESOURCES AND ASSISTANCE FOR GRANDPARENTS RAISING  
5 GRANDCHILDREN.

6  
7 WHEREAS, more than thirty-three thousand children in  
8 New Mexico are living with a grandparent who is responsible  
9 for their well-being; and

10 WHEREAS, grandparents acting as primary caregivers for  
11 their grandchildren often face financial hardship due to the  
12 lack of resources and support services for grandparents  
13 raising grandchildren; and

14 WHEREAS, many grandparents, despite acting as primary  
15 caregivers for their grandchildren, lack the legal status  
16 that would allow them to apply for benefits that their  
17 grandchildren are eligible to receive; and

18 WHEREAS, in response to the passage of Senate Joint  
19 Memorial 14 during the 2014 legislative session, the  
20 children, youth and families department published a study on  
21 the availability of resources to grandparents raising  
22 grandchildren; and

23 WHEREAS, the study reveals a dearth of public services  
24 and resources available to grandparents raising grandchildren  
25 and, in particular, to grandparents who lack legal custody of

1 their grandchildren; and

2 WHEREAS, the financial resources available to  
3 foster-care providers are available only to grandparents who  
4 have been licensed by the protective services division of the  
5 children, youth and families department and who are caring  
6 for grandchildren involved with the child protective services  
7 system; and

8 WHEREAS, the children, youth and families department  
9 reports that the number of grandparents acting as kinship  
10 guardians for their grandchildren is very small compared to  
11 the total number of grandparents caring for their  
12 grandchildren; and

13 WHEREAS, a focused approach to policymaking that  
14 incorporates input from stakeholders, advocates, community  
15 leaders and members of the public will help to ensure that  
16 grandparents raising grandchildren have access to the tools  
17 and resources necessary to nurture and provide a stable  
18 environment for their grandchildren;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE  
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that a task force be formed to include  
21 members who represent New Mexico voices for children, Pegasus  
22 legal services for children, the New Mexico coalition of  
23 educational leaders, court appointed special advocates, the  
24 New Mexico parent teacher association, parents reaching out,  
25 AARP, inc., and Las Cumbres community services, inc.; one

1 representative each from the human services department, the  
2 children, youth and families department, the children's  
3 court, the public education department, the aging and  
4 long-term services department and the office of the attorney  
5 general; and two members from the general public; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force study and  
7 recommend concrete policy changes that could be implemented  
8 to expand the availability of resources and assistance to  
9 grandparents raising grandchildren, including financial  
10 resources; legal services; food and housing assistance; and  
11 programs relating to medical care, child care, transportation  
12 and education; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the human services  
14 department, the children, youth and families department and  
15 the aging and long-term services department be requested to  
16 coordinate and provide staff support to the task force; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its  
18 findings and recommendations to the legislative health and  
19 human services committee and the legislative finance  
20 committee no later than November 2016; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
22 transmitted to the human services department, the children,  
23 youth and families department and the aging and long-term  
24 services department. \_\_\_\_\_