

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RECOGNIZING THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF INFORMAL OR FAMILY
3 CAREGIVERS AND SUPPORTING MEASURES TO PROVIDE THEM WITH
4 MEANINGFUL FINANCIAL RELIEF.

5
6 WHEREAS, as of 2015, approximately twelve percent of
7 New Mexico's population under the age of sixty-five and more
8 than forty percent of its population aged sixty-five or older
9 are persons with a disability; and

10 WHEREAS, according to the United States census bureau,
11 New Mexico's population of persons over seventy-nine years
12 old will increase more than eighty percent in the next
13 fifteen years; and

14 WHEREAS, an "informal or family caregiver" is "an unpaid
15 family member, friend or neighbor who provides care to a
16 person with an acute or chronic condition and who needs
17 assistance to manage a variety of tasks", from bathing and
18 dressing "to tube feeding and ventilator care"; and

19 WHEREAS, informal or family caregivers "remain the
20 backbone of our nation's long-term care system"; and

21 WHEREAS, informal or family caregivers take on many
22 roles in addition to caring for the basic emotional and
23 physical needs of a loved one, including medication
24 management, providing transportation to medical appointments,
25 providing care following discharge from a hospital or

1 rehabilitation facility and serving as overall health care
2 coordinators; and

3 WHEREAS, according to the Pew research center, in 2015,
4 there were forty million four hundred thousand unpaid
5 informal or family caregivers for persons over the age of
6 sixty-five in the nation, with nine out of ten caring for an
7 aging relative who is in most cases a parent; and

8 WHEREAS, most informal or family caregivers are between
9 forty-five and sixty-four years old; and

10 WHEREAS, twenty-seven percent of these caregivers
11 provide help to two or more adults over the age of
12 sixty-five, with one in five providing care on a daily basis;
13 and

14 WHEREAS, six in ten informal or family caregivers are
15 employed, with one-half working full time; and

16 WHEREAS, when a family caregiver over the age of fifty
17 is forced to leave the workforce to care for a parent, "the
18 economic toll is stunning", with the caregiver losing on
19 average over three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000) in
20 wages and social security and pension benefits over a
21 lifetime; and

22 WHEREAS, the financial toll on a woman who assumes the
23 role of caretaker in midlife exceeds on average three hundred
24 twenty-five thousand dollars (\$325,000) and may
25 "substantially increase" her risk of "living in poverty and

1 receiving public assistance" when she herself is aged; and

2 WHEREAS, New Mexico informal or family caregivers
3 participating in a 2015 AARP survey expressed frustration
4 that, while they earn too much to qualify for medicaid
5 benefits, they did not earn enough to support the needs of
6 their loved ones; and

7 WHEREAS, sixty percent of those surveyed reported having
8 used their own funds to provide care, with thirty-four
9 percent reporting that they were financially strained due to
10 their caregiving responsibilities; and

11 WHEREAS, nationwide, out-of-pocket costs for caregivers
12 of persons over fifty years old averaged five thousand five
13 hundred thirty-one dollars (\$5,531) in 2007; and

14 WHEREAS, according to the New Mexico state plan for
15 family caregivers, each year, four hundred nineteen thousand
16 informal or family caregivers in New Mexico provide two
17 hundred seventy-four million hours of unpaid services, with
18 one out of five Hispanics serving as a family caregiver and
19 ninety percent of long-term care in Indian country provided
20 by family members; and

21 WHEREAS, seventy-one percent of New Mexico family
22 caregivers report being responsible for medical or nursing
23 tasks, and seventy-four percent report being responsible for
24 medication management; and

25 WHEREAS, the New Mexico state plan for family caregivers SM 1

1 estimates the total economic value of care provided by
2 informal or family caregivers in New Mexico at three billion
3 one hundred million dollars (\$3,100,000,000) annually; and

4 WHEREAS, the economic value of this care does not take
5 into account cost savings attributable to informal or family
6 caregiving: over two thousand dollars (\$2,000) per day for
7 hospital inpatient care in New Mexico; two hundred fourteen
8 dollars (\$214) per day for nursing home care in New Mexico;
9 and three thousand three hundred thirty-three dollars
10 (\$3,333) per month for assisted living in New Mexico; and

11 WHEREAS, as of 2015, the average cost for home health
12 care in New Mexico was twenty-one dollars (\$21.00) per hour,
13 and the median hourly wage of a home health aide or personal
14 care attendant was less than ten dollars (\$10.00) per hour;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
16 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that, as recommended by the AARP public
17 policy institute, meaningful financial assistance for
18 informal and family caregivers through state or federal tax
19 credits or other mechanisms be provided to ease the financial
20 costs of caregiving and improve their financial security; and

21 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as recommended by the AARP
22 public policy institute, reforms such as social security
23 caregiver credits for time spent out of the workforce for
24 family caregiving be enacted; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as recommended by the AARP

1 public policy institute, the state seek to expand publicly
2 funded home- and community-based services programs that allow
3 payment to informal or family caregivers of consumers in its
4 renewal of the state's medicaid waiver; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the human services
6 department be requested to require in its contracts with
7 medicaid managed care organizations that informal or family
8 caregivers be reimbursed for care coordination activities;
9 and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to each member of New Mexico's congressional
12 delegation; each member of the New Mexico legislature; the
13 tribal leadership of every Indian nation, tribe and pueblo
14 located wholly or in part in New Mexico; the secretary of
15 health; the secretary of human services; the secretary of
16 aging and long-term services; and every member and participant
17 of the New Mexico family caregiver task force convened by the
18 aging and long-term services department in 2014 pursuant to
19 House Joint Memorial 4. _____

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