

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE STUDY OF CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE OPERATIONS OF THE PUBLICLY FUNDED HEALTH CARE AGENCY.

WHEREAS, the publicly funded health care agency, created by the Health Care Purchasing Act, has recently overseen the adoption of health and dental coverage by its constituent members; and

WHEREAS, concerns have been expressed that the cost of the health care coverage provided to agency constituent members compares poorly to that available in other group coverage both in New Mexico and nationally; and

WHEREAS, questions have been raised that copayments for medical services are too high; and

WHEREAS, complaints have been voiced that the dental coverage currently provided was contracted for in the absence of competitive bids and that the benefits are inadequate; and

WHEREAS, questions about the dental coverage include concerns about the availability of sufficient dentists to meet member needs; and

WHEREAS, concerns have also been expressed that the vision coverage is inadequate; and

WHEREAS, the health benefits provided by member agencies through self-insurance are not subject to the

Patient Protection Act nor the state's mental health parity statutes as these benefits are not regulated insurance products;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the legislative finance committee be requested to study the overall programs of the publicly funded health care agency with an emphasis on the adequacy of coverage in relation to costs for all forms of benefits offered the various constituent memberships; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include recommendations, including cost factors, as to whether the respective constituent members should be subject to the Patient Protection Act and the mental health parity statutes and, if so, how best to accomplish that end; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study, and any legislative recommendations, be presented to the New Mexico legislative council and the legislative health and human services committee at their November 2002 meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to each member agency of the publicly funded health care agency and to the legislative finance committee.