

A MEMORIAL

**REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT TO
ADVOCATE STRONGLY FOR YOUTH NEEDING TREATMENT FOSTER CARE AND
OTHER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES.**

WHEREAS, the citizen review board was created by the legislature to provide a permanent system for independent and objective monitoring of children placed in the custody of the children, youth and families department; and

WHEREAS, these local boards invest heavily of their time, knowledge and experience to ensure that abused and neglected children are given adequate attention to permit them to grow into healthy, productive adults; and

WHEREAS, the medicaid managed care system has been consistently identified, by citizen review boards as well as other knowledgeable observers, as lacking in the human priority criteria necessary to ensure sufficient behavioral health services for these children; and

WHEREAS, the interim legislative health and human services committee has heard testimony for more than three years that the behavioral health services under medicaid are insufficient to adequately help children in need, particularly those in treatment foster care; and

WHEREAS, among many shortcomings of medicaid managed care is the lack of relevant permanency plans for children

ten to fifteen years of age; and

WHEREAS, there is a clear lack of sufficient group homes and personnel trained to provide such services; and

WHEREAS, insufficient state and local treatment programs and facilities for substance abuse and sexual abuse problems continues to leave injured children shut off from developing healthy and productive lives; and

WHEREAS, lack of local resources can mean removing children from their families in order to obtain appropriate help outside their communities and usually means delays in returning such youth to their homes as treatment cannot be completed in the absence of suitable programs; and

WHEREAS, the children, youth and families department is in many cases the agency responsible for ensuring these children receive care adequate to their needs; and

WHEREAS, the children, youth and families department is recognized for efforts to improve the availability and competence of social workers necessary to ensure proper attention and treatment for the state's many abused and neglected children; and

WHEREAS, abused and neglected children need a strong advocate to best represent their health interests with managed care organizations created to produce profit;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children,

youth and families department make substantial efforts to represent the abused and neglected children in its custody, particularly in efforts to ensure that medicaid managed care provide adequate behavioral health care, especially treatment foster care, to permit these children to recover from their traumatic experiences and become healthy, productive citizens; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the children, youth and families department.