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**SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8**

**45TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2001**

**INTRODUCED BY**

**Sue Wilson**

**A JOINT MEMORIAL**

**REQUESTING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO INCLUDE AN OUTPATIENT  
PHARMACY BENEFIT IN THE MEDICARE PROGRAM**

**WHEREAS, the medicare program covers the costs of  
outpatient physician visits, but does not cover the cost of  
prescription drugs; and**

**WHEREAS, senior citizens incur an average of four hundred  
fifty dollars (\$450) per month in out-of-pocket prescription  
drug costs; and**

**WHEREAS, out-of-pocket spending for prescription drugs is  
especially burdensome for low-income seniors who spend, on  
average, about half of their monthly income on health care  
costs; and**

**WHEREAS, medicare beneficiaries who want to purchase**

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1 individual supplemental coverage (medigap) may not be able to  
2 afford the monthly premiums, or may be able to afford only  
3 medigap coverage that does not include prescription drug  
4 coverage; and

5 WHEREAS, many senior citizens who are needy do not qualify  
6 for medicaid coverage; and

7 WHEREAS, many senior citizens in New Mexico and in the  
8 United States have lost their medicare health maintenance  
9 organization coverage, thereby losing their prescription drug  
10 coverage; and

11 WHEREAS, senior citizens with prescription drug coverage  
12 find that the limitations to their coverage such as  
13 co-payments, deductibles and annual ceilings on drug  
14 expenditures mean that they still incur significant  
15 out-of-pocket expenditures that they are unable to bear; and

16 WHEREAS, access to pharmaceuticals is essential to the  
17 maintenance of health and prevention of health complications  
18 for many medicare beneficiaries;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE  
20 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the congress of the United States be  
21 requested to include an outpatient pharmacy benefit in the  
22 medicare program; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be  
24 sent to each member of New Mexico's congressional delegation.