

**A JOINT MEMORIAL**

**REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT, THE NEW MEXICO HEALTH POLICY COMMISSION AND OTHER STATE AGENCIES TO CREATE A COMMITTEE TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF THE NEED TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN CRITICALLY NEEDED PHYSICIANS AND HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS TO PRACTICE MEDICINE IN THE NEW MEXICO TRAUMA SYSTEM**

**WHEREAS, unintentional injury is a significant problem in New Mexico and unintentional injury is the number one cause of death for persons between the ages of one and forty-four years; and**

**WHEREAS, according to the United States centers for disease control and prevention, in 1997, New Mexico was ranked first in the country in unintentionally caused injury fatalities with a death rate that is fifty percent higher than the national rate; first in the nation in pedestrian fatalities; fourth in the nation in motor vehicle-related fatalities; and fifth in the nation in deaths caused by suicide; and**

**WHEREAS, New Mexico has the highest mortality rate for traumatic brain injury in the United States; and**

**WHEREAS, there is a continuing loss of physicians, specifically neurosurgeons, who are needed to provide care to traumatic brain injury victims; and**

WHEREAS, there are fewer than seven neurosurgeons responding to trauma or emergency room calls in the state, but the optimum number for New Mexico's population is thirty-five; and

WHEREAS, the residents and visitors to New Mexico who are seriously injured are entitled to the highest level of care, and it has been repeatedly demonstrated that trauma care effectively reduces injury mortality and morbidity; and

WHEREAS, there are thirty-four acute care hospitals in New Mexico, but only three acute care hospitals are designated by the department of health as trauma centers, leaving significantly large areas of the state with no hospitals actively participating in the New Mexico trauma system;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that a statewide trauma system study committee be created to study the New Mexico statewide trauma system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide trauma system study committee determine the financial and professional needs of health care facilities that are necessary to provide accepted levels of care statewide for trauma victims; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide trauma system study committee identify the number of physicians necessary to fully staff an adequate statewide trauma system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health, the human services department, the New Mexico health policy commission, the insurance division of the public regulation commission and the statewide emergency medical services advisory committee each designate one member to serve on the statewide trauma system study committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide trauma system study committee determine the feasibility of expanding medicaid eligibility to all of those persons incurring significant traumatic injury who have no other source of payment for services rendered; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the statewide trauma system study committee report its recommendations to address the inadequacies in the statewide trauma system, make recommendations regarding the financial requirements of practicing trauma medicine, the statewide personnel and facility needs of an adequate trauma system and other requirements for providing services in the state and the manner in which adequate participation in the New Mexico trauma system can be ensured; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the department of health, the human services department, the New Mexico health policy commission, the insurance division of the public regulation commission and the statewide emergency medical services advisory committee. =

