A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE ON LONG-TERM CARE TO STUDY THE COST AND BENEFIT OF PROVIDING TAX CREDITS TO OFFSET PRESCRIPTION DRUG SPENDING.

WHEREAS, twenty-one percent of New Mexico's population has no health insurance; and

WHEREAS, many more citizens who have health insurance have no coverage for prescriptions drugs; and

WHEREAS, medicare does not cover the cost of outpatient prescription drugs; and

WHEREAS, those who lack insurance coverage for prescription drugs pay the highest cost for prescription drugs, since they lack access to negotiated discounts; and

WHEREAS, prescription drugs are essential to treatment of most medical conditions and are critical to maintain the health of those suffering from many chronic conditions; and

WHEREAS, those who cannot afford to purchase prescription drugs may suffer severe health consequences as a result of not taking the prescribed medication; and

WHEREAS, providing a tax credit to offset the annual expenditures for these necessary and expensive prescription drugs may be the only means to allow some persons to purchase prescription drugs for therapeutic and life-saving purposes; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico already has removed the requirement for payment of gross receipts taxes on prescription drugs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the cabinet level interagency committee on long-term care be requested to conduct a study of the cost and benefit of providing tax credits to offset prescription drug spending; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the interagency committee on long-term care report its findings to the interim legislative health and human services committee and the revenue stabilization and tax policy committee at their October 2002 meetings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be sent to the legislative health and human services committee, the revenue stabilization and tax policy committee and to the respective members of the interagency committee on long-term care.