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## HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 114

## 46TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2003 INTRODUCED BY

Earlene Roberts

## A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT TO EXPAND PROGRAMS TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT MARRIAGE FOR RECIPIENTS OF TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES.

WHEREAS, one of the three main goals of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, better known as welfare reform, is to encourage marriage and the formation and maintenance of two-parent families; and

WHEREAS, marriage and family are essential to the wellbeing of our social, political, economic and civic institutions, benefitting not only the immediate family but also society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, it has been shown that people who are married enjoy happier, healthier and longer lives, more financial security and better mental health and that married people are

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more productive at work and are involved in relationships that have less domestic violence and less substance abuse; and

WHEREAS, research shows that teaching fundamental relationship skills, such as communication and conflict resolution skills, increases the likelihood of the health, happiness and longevity of a marriage; and

WHEREAS, the human services department, in fiscal year 2003, contracted with New Mexico state university to provide programs to recipients of temporary assistance for needy families to strengthen families through parenting classes in Dona Ana, Valencia and Otero counties; and

WHEREAS, parents and parents-to-be receiving temporary assistance for needy families funds across New Mexico could benefit from similar parenting programs;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department be requested to expand its contract with New Mexico state university to offer parenting classes statewide for temporary assistance for needy families recipients; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of human services.