

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO STUDY AND MAKE  
RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF TRAUMA CARE  
IN NEW MEXICO.

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

WHEREAS, in 2002, New Mexico was ranked by the federal  
centers for disease control and prevention as first in the  
nation in unintentional injury, has a death rate that is fifty  
percent higher than the national average and is first in the  
nation in pedestrian fatalities caused by traumatic injury;  
and

WHEREAS, New Mexico has the highest mortality rate for  
traumatic brain injury; and

WHEREAS, residents and visitors to New Mexico who are  
seriously injured are entitled to receive the highest level of  
care; and

WHEREAS, the optimal number of neurosurgeons for New  
Mexico's population is thirty-five; however, there are fewer  
than ten neurosurgeons in the state; and

WHEREAS, there is a continuing loss of neurosurgeons  
needed to provide care to traumatic brain injury victims in  
the state; and

WHEREAS, it has been repeatedly demonstrated that trauma care effectively reduces injury mortality and morbidity in children; and

WHEREAS, the trauma system infrastructure is only minimally funded by the state and intermittently funded by the federal government; and

WHEREAS, the trauma system needs to be expanded, and no sustainable source of funding exists; and

WHEREAS, of the thirty-four acute care hospitals in the state, only three are designated by the department of health as trauma centers, leaving significantly large areas of the state with inadequate access to trauma care;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be requested to create a targeted-issue trauma system committee to study and make recommendations to improve the statewide system of trauma care in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study identify the structure, personnel, facilities and related requirements necessary to develop a statewide pediatric trauma system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study reflect the cost of continuing operation of both an adult and a pediatric trauma system in New Mexico; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study examine the financial and professional needs of trauma physicians to

ensure provision of specialized care for trauma victims statewide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the department of health request the insurance division of the public regulation commission, the statewide emergency medical services advisory committee, the trauma advisory committee, a statewide organization representing physicians, a community hospital in Santa Fe and a statewide trauma foundation to each designate one representative to serve on the targeted-issue trauma system committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the committee report its findings and recommendations to address the need for trauma system neurosurgeons, development of a pediatric system and adequate financing for a statewide trauma system to the interim legislative health and human services committee by October 2005; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be sent to the secretary of health, the director of the insurance division of the public regulation commission, the statewide emergency medical services advisory committee and the trauma advisory committee.