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SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 16

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2006

INTRODUCED BY

James G. Taylor

FOR THE WELFARE REFORM OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL

PROVIDING FOR A STUDY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF WELFARE REFORM
POLICIES.

WHEREAS, ten years ago, the state of New Mexico
instituted new welfare policies that required those on public
assistance to work; and

WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico remains among the
poorest states in the country and ranks higher in poverty than
the national average in every single age group; and

WHEREAS, almost one-half of New Mexico's homeless people
work but earn too little for a permanent home; and

WHEREAS, families of the working poor continue to earn
substantially less than the federal poverty level; and

WHEREAS, disparity among New Mexico residents is striking
as seen when comparing the Pueblo of Zuni, with over one-half

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1 of its population in poverty, with the richest county in the
2 United States, Los Alamos county; and

3 WHEREAS, requiring both parents in two-parent families to
4 work has had an impact on the need for child care and before-
5 and after-school programs; and

6 WHEREAS, data on how long people employed under the
7 temporary assistance for needy families program remain in the
8 work force after initial placement is not currently available;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, data on the average annual earnings of those
11 employed through the temporary assistance for needy families
12 program is not currently available; and

13 WHEREAS, such information is critical to the welfare
14 reform oversight committee's role;

15 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
16 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the human services department be
17 requested to collect such data and to convene a working
18 families task force to examine and report on the data and on
19 the effectiveness of the welfare reform measures undertaken in
20 the past decade, comparing incomes, earnings and employment
21 longevity of program participants and other relevant data from
22 the start of the temporary assistance for needy families
23 program to the year 2005; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working families task
25 force report to the welfare reform oversight committee by

. 159501. 1

1 October 2006 on the effectiveness of the welfare reform
2 measures undertaken in the past decade; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
4 designees of the secretary of human services, the secretary of
5 children, youth and families, the secretary of Indian affairs,
6 the executive director of the office of workforce training and
7 development and five representatives of appropriate community
8 groups whose charters include serving the state's poorest
9 people; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to the secretary of human services, the secretary
12 of children, youth and families, the secretary of Indian
13 affairs and the executive director of the office of workforce
14 training and development.

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