

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT TO EMPLOY THE MISSOURI MODEL OF JUVENILE INCARCERATION AT THE J. PAUL TAYLOR CENTER IN DONA ANA COUNTY.

WHEREAS, New Mexico, like all states, works diligently but not always successfully, to rehabilitate young criminal offenders, especially those who commit nonviolent crimes; and

WHEREAS, it is both cost-effective and morally right to devote as much time, energy, money and other resources into redirecting young offenders' behavior to more productive paths; and

WHEREAS, while it is important for the public safety that certain young offenders be physically separated from the public and punished for their crimes, it is equally important that the vast majority of young offenders be given every opportunity to address and correct the issues in their lives that contribute to their behavior; and

WHEREAS, Missouri's juvenile justice system is recognized across the country as a model for low recidivism rates and successful outcomes for youthful offenders; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri model relies on small facilities and intensive group counseling and operates on the premise that children are much more significantly influenced by peer pressure than they are by adult direction and punishment; and

WHEREAS, the Missouri model creates peer groups of juvenile offenders that gradually assume responsibility for the behavior of each member in the group; and

WHEREAS, professional case managers, group therapy, family counseling and transition services for all children coming out of secure care are an integral part of the model; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico could benefit from employing the Missouri model of juvenile justice and studying its results;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the children, youth and families department be requested to implement the Missouri model of juvenile justice at the J. Paul Taylor center in Dona Ana county and regularly report to the governor and the legislature on the impact of that transition; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of children, youth and families.