

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY OF OPTIONS FOR SECURING ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDING FOR UNCOMPENSATED INDIGENT PATIENT CARE IN NEW MEXICO HOSPITALS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico hospitals bear a substantial financial burden in providing uncompensated care to indigents; and

WHEREAS, adequate and equitable funding of hospitals is of critical importance to all New Mexicans; and

WHEREAS, increased federal assistance in funding hospitals would relieve the burden that New Mexico hospitals bear in providing uncompensated care to indigent persons; and

WHEREAS, increased federal assistance in funding hospitals would also relieve the disproportionate burden that New Mexico hospitals bear in providing care to illegal aliens by virtue of being a border state; and

WHEREAS, increased federal funding for uncompensated care is critical at a time, such as this one, when uninsured patients often receive care in the state's hospital emergency rooms and hospitals, and the hospitals, in turn, request appropriations to offset the cost of providing care to those who cannot or will not pay; and

WHEREAS, the current funding of the university of New Mexico hospitals is inequitable, in that funding comes from a

mill levy on Bernalillo county property owners but the hospitals serve indigent patients from throughout the state;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico health policy commission be requested to convene a task force to study hospital funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force comprise nine members appointed by the executive branch, including the medicaid director or the medicaid director's designee, a representative from the university of New Mexico hospitals, a member from the New Mexico health policy commission and members with expertise in medicaid funding and hospital funding; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force study options for securing additional federal funding for uncompensated indigent patient care in New Mexico hospitals, including the option of requesting an expansion of the existing federal waiver for the state coverage insurance program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force present recommendations and conclusions to the appropriate interim legislative committees no later than December 1, 2008; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the governor, the executive director of the New Mexico health policy commission, the secretary of human services, the secretary of health and each county indigent

hospital and county health care board.