

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING A STUDY TO PLAN AND DEVELOP A TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAM LEADING TO CREDENTIALING OF INDIVIDUALS EMPLOYED AS DIRECT CAREGIVERS FOR DISABLED AND AGING NEW MEXICANS.

WHEREAS, the United States bureau of labor statistics reports that in 2007 there were twenty-one thousand five hundred twenty New Mexicans whose primary occupation was classified as one of the following direct caregiver positions: personal care assistant, home care aide, home health aide or certified nursing assistant; and

WHEREAS, the United States bureau of labor statistics reports that direct caregiver positions are the second fastest-growing occupations in New Mexico, with six thousand one hundred ninety job openings every year projected for these occupations between the years 2006 and 2016; and

WHEREAS, high job turnover occurs as a result of worker shortages, low wages, no benefits, little training and little recognition for the work performed; and

WHEREAS, quality of care is compromised because employers are unable to meet the need for high-quality services for those who are elderly or disabled because of the high turnover among direct caregivers; and

WHEREAS, respondents in a 2002 survey by the university

of New Mexico identified job-related training as the single most important factor in direct caregiver job retention; and

WHEREAS, additional education and training is one means of professionalizing the field of direct care so as to improve the quality of services for persons who are elderly or disabled;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the developmental disabilities planning council be requested to convene a task force of experts to study, plan and implement a training and education program leading to credentialing of direct caregivers in the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the organizations and agencies to be represented in devising the training and education program include the department of health's developmental disabilities supports division; the human services department; the aging and long-term services department; the higher education department; state educational institutions; national organizations that provide training and education to direct caregivers; direct caregivers themselves; service providers; and representatives who are from or who advocate for the brain injured, disabled, developmentally disabled and senior citizen communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the plan include training and education credentialing for the variety of occupations in the

field of direct care, including those who work as personal care assistants, home care aides, home health aides and certified nursing assistants, as well as costs associated with the plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its plan to the interim legislative health and human services committee by October 31, 2009; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the executive director of the developmental disabilities planning council and to the secretaries of health, human services, aging and long-term services and higher education.