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HOUSE MEMORIAL 61

53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

DECLARING FEBRUARY 23, 2017 "#CHOOSEPT DAY" IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WHEREAS, New Mexico has one of the highest drug overdose rates in the nation; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is second only to West Virginia in per capita deaths, primarily due to prescription and illegal opioid drugs; and

WHEREAS, there were four thousand three hundred forty deaths from overdoses in New Mexico from 2006 to 2014; and

WHEREAS, the federal centers for disease control and prevention has indicated that heroin and prescription opioids account for the majority of drug deaths; and

WHEREAS, according to the centers for disease control and prevention, in 2012, health providers wrote two hundred fifty-

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1 nine million prescriptions for opioid pain medication, enough
2 for every American adult to have his or her own bottle of
3 pills; and

4 WHEREAS, one in four people who receive prescription
5 opioids long term for non-cancer pain in primary care settings
6 struggles with addiction; and

7 WHEREAS, opioid side effects include addiction,
8 depression, overdose and withdrawal symptoms; and

9 WHEREAS, every day, more than one thousand people are
10 treated in emergency departments for misusing prescription
11 opioids; and

12 WHEREAS, since 1999, more than one hundred sixty-five
13 thousand people in the United States have died from opioid pain
14 medication-related overdoses; and

15 WHEREAS, over the past fifteen years, increasing numbers
16 of Americans have been prescribed opioids for pain management,
17 with sales of prescription opioids and deaths related to
18 opioids and heroin quadrupling since 1999; and

19 WHEREAS, the centers for disease control and prevention
20 recommends non-opioid approaches for chronic pain; and

21 WHEREAS, in March 2016, the centers for disease control
22 and prevention released guidelines urging clinicians to
23 consider opioid therapy only if the expected benefits for both
24 pain and function were anticipated to outweigh the risks to the
25 patient; and

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1 WHEREAS, physical therapy is effective for numerous
2 conditions, and the centers for disease control and prevention
3 has cited evidence in support of exercise as part of physical
4 therapy treatment for familiar conditions like low back pain,
5 hip or knee osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia; and

6 WHEREAS, physical therapy is a safe and effective
7 alternative to opioids for long-term pain management by
8 treating pain through movement, whereas opioids often only mask
9 the pain; and

10 WHEREAS, physical therapy provides improved mobility,
11 increased independence, decreased pain and prevention of other
12 health problems through movement and exercise; and

13 WHEREAS, the New Mexico chapter of the American physical
14 therapy association is participating in the national #ChoosePT
15 campaign to build public awareness about physical therapy as an
16 alternative to opioid prescriptions for chronic pain; and

17 WHEREAS, the #ChoosePT campaign raises awareness about the
18 dangers of prescription opioids and encourages consumers and
19 those who prescribe medications to choose safer alternatives,
20 such as physical therapy; and

21 WHEREAS, the #ChoosePT campaign encourages physical
22 therapy providers to educate their patients about the dangers
23 of opioids, to ask about problems with substance abuse or
24 addiction, to listen closely to patients describing their pain,
25 to be sure that the patient feels heard and to set realistic

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1 goals for pain and functioning based on the patient's
2 diagnosis; and

3 WHEREAS, #ChoosePT is consistent with the centers for
4 disease control and prevention guidelines, which encourage
5 provider's to check that non-opioid therapies have been tried
6 before prescribing opioids; and

7 WHEREAS, in cases where opioids are prescribed, providers
8 are encouraged to "start low and go slow" with dosing and to
9 combine opioids with non-drug approaches, such as physical
10 therapy;

11 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
12 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that February 23,
13 2017 be declared "#ChoosePT Day" in the house of
14 representatives; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that physical therapists be
16 encouraged to do their part in decreasing opioid addiction by
17 providing physical therapy as an alternative treatment to
18 opioids to manage chronic pain; and

19 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be
20 transmitted to the New Mexico chapter of the American physical
21 therapy association.