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HOUSE MEMORIAL 86

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DIVISION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO SCHOOL OF MEDICINE TO CONVENE A TASK
FORCE TO STUDY EXTENDING THE HARM REDUCTION ACT.

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Harm Reduction Act is to
prevent the transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus,
hepatitis B and C viruses and other blood-borne diseases; and

WHEREAS, at this time, the implementation of the Harm
Reduction Act focuses mainly on illnesses transmitted by blood,
but not by other means such as sexual activity; and

WHEREAS, sexually transmitted infections include the human
immunodeficiency virus and hepatitis B and C viruses as well as
the hepatitis A virus, chlamydia, gonorrhea, antibiotic-
resistant gonorrhea, syphilis, human papillomavirus and others;
and

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1 WHEREAS, the effects of sexually transmitted infections
2 include chronic illness, infertility, cancer, compromised
3 childbirth and death; and

4 WHEREAS, early detection of sexually transmitted
5 infections allows improved access to treatment, early
6 intervention and efficient use of resources, and clinical
7 diagnoses of sexually transmitted infections can be followed by
8 appropriate and timely treatment; and

9 WHEREAS, medically marginalized or unserved populations
10 are the most at risk of contracting sexually transmitted
11 infections; and

12 WHEREAS, for many medically marginalized or unserved
13 individuals, the struggle to find food, shelter, clothing and
14 safety are immediate priorities, while sexually transmitted
15 infections go untreated; and

16 WHEREAS, sexually transmitted infections often result in a
17 long chain of infection by being transmitted to others,
18 including spouses and family members; and

19 WHEREAS, most marginalized or unserved patients do not
20 receive treatment to reduce the risk of additional infections
21 themselves or to reduce the risk of transmitting infections to
22 others; and

23 WHEREAS, breaking the cycle of disease among all
24 populations is a worthy effort to be pursued by state
25 officials; and

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1 WHEREAS, it is in society's best interests to protect the
2 public health by reducing disease among all populations through
3 prevention and prophylaxis; and

4 WHEREAS, medically marginalized or unserved at-risk
5 populations often do not have access to contraception; and

6 WHEREAS, unplanned pregnancies in medically marginalized
7 or unserved at-risk populations frequently result in infants
8 being placed in foster care; and

9 WHEREAS, the breaking apart of the family unit harms not
10 only parents and children, but communities and the state as
11 well; and

12 WHEREAS, an extension of the Harm Reduction Act could
13 provide a systematic way of identifying patients with sexually
14 transmitted diseases, monitoring their progress and ensuring
15 that the patients receive appropriate care to reduce the spread
16 of sexually transmitted diseases and unintended pregnancies;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
18 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the division of
19 infectious diseases of the university of New Mexico school of
20 medicine be requested to convene a task force to study
21 extending the Harm Reduction Act to include offering sexually
22 transmitted infection testing and treatment and contraception
23 to people of medically marginalized or unserved at-risk
24 populations; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested

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1 to:

2 A. evaluate New Mexico's current approaches to
3 promoting public health among medically marginalized or
4 unserved at-risk populations and how those approaches may be
5 improved;

6 B. facilitate and support implementation of the
7 task force's recommendations for extending the Harm Reduction
8 Act by the department of health;

9 C. develop strategy recommendations for effective
10 community outreach and education;

11 D. develop facilities and resource recommendations
12 to improve delivery of sexually transmitted infection testing
13 and treatment and the delivery of contraception in New Mexico;
14 and

15 E. develop policy and procedural recommendations to
16 the department of health's harm reduction program to
17 successfully implement the task force's recommendations; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
19 evaluate New Mexico's current approach to promoting public
20 health and to providing sexually transmitted infection
21 prevention and the provision of contraception to people of
22 medically marginalized or unserved at-risk populations; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to
24 study ways to determine the potential impacts of an expansion
25 of the Harm Reduction Act on medically marginalized or unserved

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1 at-risk populations; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force include
3 representatives from the division of infectious diseases and
4 the department of family and community medicine at the
5 university of New Mexico school of medicine, the department of
6 health, street safe New Mexico and from the harm reduction
7 staffs at Albuquerque healthcare for the homeless, first
8 nations community healthsource and the transgender resource
9 center of New Mexico; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this task force be requested
11 to invite additional task force members to recruit greater
12 statewide representation, including physicians and
13 representatives from the sub-specialties of public health and
14 infectious disease and self-advocates; and

15 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force present its
16 findings and recommendations to the appropriate interim
17 legislative committees by October 1, 2019; and

18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
19 transmitted to the governor, the secretary of health, the
20 secretary of general services, the secretary of public safety,
21 the chief of the division of infectious diseases at the
22 university of New Mexico school of medicine, the program
23 director of the department of family and community medicine at
24 the university of New Mexico school of medicine, the executive
25 director of street safe New Mexico, the chief executive

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1 director of Albuquerque healthcare for the homeless, the
2 president of first nations community healthsource, the co-
3 directors of the transgender resource center of New Mexico and
4 the chair of the legislative health and human services
5 committee.

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