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HOUSE MEMORIAL 7

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2023

INTRODUCED BY

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A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT AND THE WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW MEXICO BASIC INCOME FOR LOW-INCOME NEW MEXICANS AND TO REPORT ITS FINDINGS TO THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, according to the United States census bureau, as of 2021, New Mexico has the third highest rate of poverty in the nation, with eighteen and four-tenths percent of New Mexicans living below the poverty level; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States census bureau, as of 2021, New Mexico has the second highest rate of childhood poverty in the nation, with twenty-eight percent of New Mexican children living below the poverty level; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States bureau of labor

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1 statistics, as of November 2022, New Mexico has one of the
2 highest unemployment rates in the nation, at four and one-tenth
3 percent; and

4 WHEREAS, according to the workforce solutions department,
5 in 2021, New Mexico has a low labor force participation rate of
6 fifty-six and seven-tenths percent, and that rate continues to
7 decline; and

8 WHEREAS, the center for budget and policy priorities
9 reports that as of 2019, forty-one percent of New Mexico
10 households had incomes below the poverty line; and

11 WHEREAS, as of May 2021, forty-four percent of New Mexico
12 residents were enrolled in medicaid; and

13 WHEREAS, "universal basic income" is defined as a
14 government-guaranteed payment that each citizen receives; and

15 WHEREAS, universal basic income is intended to provide
16 money to citizens so that they can pay for necessities, whether
17 or not they are employed; and

18 WHEREAS, universal basic income is not intended to replace
19 jobs; and

20 WHEREAS, the national bureau of economic research
21 concluded that universal and basic cash transfers do not
22 significantly decrease aggregate employment; and

23 WHEREAS, universal basic income studies have concluded
24 that universal basic income boosts recipients' mental and
25 financial well-being, improves employment rates and enables

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1 recipients to find full-time employment and pursue new
2 opportunities; and

3 WHEREAS, the Choctaw Nation is piloting a universal basic
4 income program using federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and
5 Economic Security Act funding; and

6 WHEREAS, numerous cities and countries around the globe
7 have instituted or studied some form of universal basic income;
8 and

9 WHEREAS, the cities of Santa Fe and Las Cruces are
10 considering implementing basic income programs; and

11 WHEREAS, because the federal measure for poverty does not
12 take into consideration costs such as child care and health
13 care, both of which draw from a person's income and are a
14 determining factor in a person's ability to work, the federal
15 measure does not give the full picture of what it will take to
16 support worker-centered policies in New Mexico;

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
18 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary
19 of human services and the secretary of workforce solutions be
20 requested to convene a task force to study the impact that
21 implementing a New Mexico basic income program for low-income
22 New Mexicans would have on low-income New Mexicans and to make
23 recommendations for implementing such a program; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force consist of
25 representatives of community organizations working on behalf of

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1 low-income communities and those agencies and organizations
2 already working with those communities; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a representative from the
4 office of the governor who is identified as working on issues
5 affecting low-income New Mexicans be invited to participate in
6 the task force by those agencies convening the task force; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force report its
8 findings and recommendations and provide copies of its written
9 report to the legislative finance committee and the chair and
10 members of the legislative health and human services committee
11 and any other appropriate legislative interim committees by
12 November 1, 2023; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
14 transmitted to the secretary of human services, the secretary
15 of workforce solutions, the director of the legislative finance
16 committee and the chair of the legislative health and human
17 services committee.