

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH A PERMANENT INTERIM BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATURE.

WHEREAS, according to the national alliance for mental illness, mental illness has an impact on the lives of sixty million Americans; and

WHEREAS, the national alliance for mental illness reports that one in ten children in the United States lives with mental illness; and

WHEREAS, behavioral health is an area of policy that encompasses not only mental illness and behavioral health wellness programs, but policies regarding alcohol and drug dependency and misuse; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is facing a severe crisis as one of the states worst afflicted with drug dependency and misuse; and

WHEREAS, with adequate support and treatment, individuals living with mental illness or substance dependency can avoid much suffering and live full lives as contributing members of New Mexico society; and

WHEREAS, the state of New Mexico's interagency purchaser of behavioral health services, the interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative, expends nearly four hundred

million dollars (\$400,000,000) a year for behavioral health services; and

WHEREAS, New Mexicans depend for their well-being and safety upon a strong behavioral health services network; and

WHEREAS, in recent years, the legislature has passed many bills and memorials demonstrating the legislature's concerns regarding behavioral health matters; and

WHEREAS, to address the intense need for legislative oversight of the many ways in which mental illness has an impact on health care needs, public safety, the courts, economic development and many other factors, the New Mexico legislative council created in 2011 an interim behavioral health services subcommittee of the legislative health and human services committee; and

WHEREAS, the behavioral health services subcommittee met twice during the 2011 interim; and

WHEREAS, in the short time allotted to the behavioral health services subcommittee, it attempted to cover myriad behavioral health issues: it reviewed the status of behavioral health services delivered through the interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative's contract with the single statewide behavioral health managed-care entity; it considered the reintegration of medicaid behavioral health benefits with physical health benefits in the medicaid modernization plan; it devoted substantial attention to the

state's substance abuse epidemic; it heard extensive testimony on criminal justice diversion programs for individuals living with mental illness; it reviewed behavioral health care delivery and finance innovations; and it studied the state's behavioral health care work force needs; and

WHEREAS, behavioral health in New Mexico requires a considerably greater amount of legislators' time and attention in order to properly address the substantial need for behavioral health services in the state;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to create a permanent interim behavioral health services committee of the legislature; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to draw upon membership in both the house of representatives and the senate and from both political parties in appointing members to the behavioral health services committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to approve monthly meetings each interim for the behavioral health services committee; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to charge the behavioral health services committee with the oversight and continuing study of the programs, agencies, policies, issues and needs relating to

behavioral health statewide; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to charge the behavioral health services committee with reviewing the statutes, constitutional provisions, agency rules and court decisions governing behavioral health programs, agencies and issues; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to charge the behavioral health services committee with reviewing and making recommendations regarding the full continuum of programs and services available for individuals who need behavioral health services, including the treatment of mental illness and substance abuse; public programs such as medicaid and the statewide behavioral health services contract that provide behavioral health services; treatment guardianships, jail diversion and other public safety matters; and the state's behavioral health service provider work force needs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.