

1 HOUSE MEMORIAL 67

2 **53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2018**

3 INTRODUCED BY

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10 A MEMORIAL

11 REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH TO ADD OPIOID USE DISORDER
12 AS A "QUALIFYING CONDITION" IN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH RULES IN
13 ORDER THAT INDIVIDUALS LIVING WITH OPIOID USE DISORDERS MAY BE
14 ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LYNN AND ERIN COMPASSIONATE USE
15 ACT MEDICAL CANNABIS PROGRAM; REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO
16 LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO CHARGE THE LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN
17 SERVICES COMMITTEE WITH HEARING EXPERT TESTIMONY ON USING
18 MEDICAL CANNABIS TO PROVIDE AN ALTERNATIVE TO OPIOIDS IN ACUTE
19 AND CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT AND IN PREVENTING AND TREATING
20 OPIOID USE DISORDERS.

21
22 WHEREAS, every day, more than ninety Americans die after
23 overdosing on opioids, often after becoming addicted to these
24 drugs; and

25 WHEREAS, many of these opioids are prescribed to patients

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1 for the treatment of pain; and

2 WHEREAS, there is a growing body of research showing that
3 medical cannabis may be a safe alternative allowing the
4 replacement or reduction of opioid-based treatments, thereby
5 reducing the risk and number of opioid-related deaths; and

6 WHEREAS, cannabis helps to reduce symptoms associated with
7 detoxing from opioids, including nausea, vomiting, pain and
8 anxiety, as well as cravings; and

9 WHEREAS, opioid use disorder often goes untreated because
10 medication assisted treatment is not accessible to many
11 residents of New Mexico, especially those living in rural areas
12 of the state; and

13 WHEREAS, a study published in 2017 in the *Harm Reduction*
14 *Journal* provides evidence that suggests that expanding medical
15 cannabis programs to people with opioid use disorders could
16 help people suffering from addiction at risk of dying from
17 overdose; and

18 WHEREAS, a study published in 2017 in the *American Journal*
19 *of Public Health* concludes that legalization of cannabis in
20 Colorado was associated with short-term reductions in opioid-
21 related deaths; and

22 WHEREAS, a 2009 study of three hundred fifty medical
23 cannabis patients in California found that twenty-six percent
24 of respondents reported they used cannabis as a substitute for
25 illicit drugs and sixty-five and eight-tenths percent as a

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1 substitute for prescription drugs; and

2 WHEREAS, a similar study to the 2009 California medical
3 cannabis patient study that was done in Canada in 2016 found
4 results similar to those reported in the California study; and

5 WHEREAS, a study published in 2014 in the *Journal of the*
6 *American Medical Association* found that states with medical
7 cannabis laws were associated with a significant reduction in
8 mortality from opioid use, with a twenty-five percent reduction
9 in opioid overdose deaths reported in these states; and

10 WHEREAS, the intent of the medical cannabis program is to
11 provide access to allow the beneficial use of medical cannabis
12 within a regulated system; and

13 WHEREAS, a recent university of Michigan study has
14 concluded that patients using medical cannabis to control
15 chronic pain reported a sixty-four percent reduction in their
16 use of more traditional prescription pain medications,
17 including opioids; and

18 WHEREAS, researchers from the university of Michigan
19 school of public health and the university of Michigan medical
20 school reported that their results suggest that for some
21 people, medical cannabis may be an alternative to more common
22 prescription painkillers at a time when national health leaders
23 are asking the medical community to cut back on prescribing
24 opioids such as Vicodin and OxyContin; and

25 WHEREAS, hundreds of people in Massachusetts who are

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1 addicted to opioids are being treated with medical cannabis;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, a March 2017 article in the journal *Trends in*
4 *Neurosciences* urges that the initial promise shown by
5 cannabidiol warrants additional clinical studies to further
6 evaluate cannabidiol's potential as a treatment for opioid use
7 disorders; and

8 WHEREAS, a study published in 2017 in the journal *Planta*
9 *Medica* suggests that cannabidiol, a nonpsychoactive compound
10 found in medical cannabis, blocks opioid reward centers and
11 thereby may be effective in treating opioid use disorders; and

12 WHEREAS, on November 6, 2016 and November 3, 2017, the New
13 Mexico medical cannabis advisory board recommended to the
14 secretary of health that opioid use disorder be included in
15 department of health medical cannabis program rules as a
16 "qualifying condition", that would render those living with
17 opioid use disorders as eligible to participate in New Mexico's
18 medical cannabis program; and

19 WHEREAS, in the first regular session of the fifty-third
20 legislature, the legislature passed a bill that would have
21 added opioid use disorder to the list of qualifying conditions;

22 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
23 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that, in light of
24 the epidemic of opioid-induced deaths in New Mexico and
25 recommendations by the New Mexico medical cannabis advisory

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1 board to include opioid use disorder among those conditions
2 listed in department of health rules as a "qualifying
3 condition" for participation in the Lynn and Erin Compassionate
4 Use Act medical cannabis program, the secretary of health be
5 requested to adopt and promulgate in the department of health's
6 medical cannabis program rules opioid use disorder as a
7 "qualifying condition"; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New Mexico legislative
9 council be requested to charge the legislative health and human
10 services committee with hearing evidence related to the use of
11 medical cannabis to combat opioid use disorders during the 2018
12 legislative interim; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, if it is charged with holding
14 hearings on the use of medical cannabis to combat opioid use
15 disorders during the 2018 legislative interim, the legislative
16 health and human services committee receive testimony from the
17 secretary of health, the medical cannabis advisory board, the
18 chair of the New Mexico medical board and the chair of the
19 board of osteopathic medicine as well as national experts in
20 the therapeutic application of medical cannabis, in acute and
21 chronic pain management and in the prevention and treatment of
22 substance use disorders; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
24 transmitted to the president pro tempore of the senate, the
25 speaker of the house of representatives, the chair of the

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1 legislative health and human services committee, the secretary
2 of health, the members of the medical cannabis advisory board,
3 the chair of the New Mexico medical board and the chair of the
4 board of osteopathic medicine.

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