



The Legislature
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State of New Mexico

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CHAPTER _____

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 21

Introduced by

REPRESENTATIVE RHONDA S. KING AND REPRESENTATIVE DON L. TRIPP



1 A JOINT MEMORIAL

2 REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES TO
3 CONVENE A STEERING COMMITTEE TO STUDY AND DEVELOP EQUAL ACCESS
4 TO SERVICES FOR YOUTH STATEWIDE WITH AN EMPHASIS ON RURAL AND
5 FRONTIER AREAS OF THE STATE.

6
7 WHEREAS, acts of juvenile delinquency are detrimental to
8 communities and to public safety and costly to the taxpayer;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, too many youth are engaging in behaviors that
11 lead to school difficulties, such as academic failure, truancy
12 and suspension, and that lead to arrest and referral to the
13 juvenile justice system; and

14 WHEREAS, youth involved in delinquent behaviors who do
15 not receive effective intervention services are at high risk
16 for academic failure and increased criminal activity; and

17 WHEREAS, effective intervention services are not
18 uniformly available throughout the state resulting in
19 inequitable treatment and outcomes for youth and their
20 families; and

21 WHEREAS, there is also a need for substance abuse and
22 mental health services for youth and a need to deliver the
23 appropriate wraparound services from birth to age twenty-five,
24 including home visitation for first-time mothers, teen
25 pregnancy services and other needed services; and

1 WHEREAS, the public policy of the state as expressed in
2 the Children's Code is to provide a continuum of services for
3 children and their families, including prevention, diversion,
4 early intervention and treatment; and

5 WHEREAS, another goal in the Children's Code is to
6 reduce overrepresentation of minority children in the juvenile
7 justice system and in family services and abuse and neglect
8 systems through early intervention, community support services
9 and the elimination of discrimination; and

10 WHEREAS, a clinical diagnosis for youth in the justice
11 system, although well-intended as a means to get treatment
12 services, often becomes a stigma, labeling the youth and
13 disqualifying the youth for military service and job
14 opportunities; and

15 WHEREAS, in order to achieve these goals, equitable and
16 guaranteed access to services in rural and frontier
17 communities must be developed, with consideration given to
18 geography and transportation issues; and

19 WHEREAS, diversion and early intervention, particularly
20 in the schools, will increase public safety while holding
21 children accountable for their actions; and

22 WHEREAS, there is no national model for providing access
23 to effective services for youth in rural and frontier
24 communities, and New Mexico desires to become such a model;
25 and

1 WHEREAS, New Mexico needs to organize efforts statewide
2 in order to provide juvenile justice system reform, similar to
3 Bernalillo county's, and to provide equitable access to
4 juvenile justice services throughout the state, secure
5 positive outcomes for youth and increase public safety;

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE
7 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the secretary of children, youth and
8 families be requested to convene a steering committee to study
9 how to develop and provide equitable treatment and equal
10 access to services for youth, from prevention to intervention,
11 with an emphasis on the underserved rural areas of the state;
12 and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the study include an
14 examination of whether there is equal access to services
15 statewide and whether youth in the justice system are treated
16 equitably statewide; an examination of youth truancy,
17 suspension from school and referrals to the juvenile justice
18 system and how to develop and implement effective early
19 intervention services; an examination of mental health and
20 substance abuse services for youth, especially in rural areas;
21 an examination of case processing time for youth in the
22 justice system from arrest to disposition by the court; an
23 examination of the length of time adjudicated youth held in
24 detention must wait for placement in a treatment program or
25 facility; and an examination of the conditions of confinement

1 in juvenile detention centers as well as current efforts to
2 improve training for detention officers; and

3 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the steering committee
4 encourage the nineteen existing juvenile justice continuum
5 boards to help in the development and improvement of needed
6 services, and that the steering committee develop and
7 recommend a long-term sustainable plan for juvenile justice
8 system reform and youth services statewide; and

9 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the steering committee
10 include representatives from the children, youth and families
11 department, the state legislature, the administrative office
12 of the courts, the New Mexico supreme court, the New Mexico
13 district judges association, the New Mexico attorney general,
14 the public education department, the department of health, the
15 human services department, the department of public safety,
16 the New Mexico association of counties, the juvenile justice
17 advisory committee, urban and rural juvenile justice continuum
18 sites, the interagency behavioral health purchasing
19 collaborative, the behavioral health statewide entity, the
20 district attorney's association, the public defender
21 department, a local law enforcement agency, a county juvenile
22 detention administrator, a nonprofit organization serving
23 youths and their families, a nonprofit advocacy group
24 interested in youth services and other interested parties as
25 appropriate; and

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the steering committee
2 report its findings and recommendations, including a strategic
3 plan and outcomes, to the legislative finance committee and
4 other appropriate interim legislative committees by October
5 2012; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
7 transmitted to the children, youth and families department,
8 the legislative council service, the administrative office of
9 the courts, the New Mexico supreme court, the New Mexico
10 attorney general, the public education department, the
11 department of health, the human services department, the
12 department of public safety, the New Mexico association of
13 counties, the juvenile justice advisory committee, the
14 interagency behavioral health purchasing collaborative, the
15 behavioral health statewide entity, the district attorney's
16 association and the public defender department.

S/ BEN LUJAN
BEN LUJAN, SPEAKER
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