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For Immediate Release

Committee to Receive Preliminary Presentation to Close the Uninsured Gap in New Mexico and Achieve Universal Coverage

Santa Fe, New Mexico, April 24, 2007 – The Health Coverage for New Mexicans Committee (Committee) will receive a preliminary report from Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (Mathematica) on Thursday, April 26. The meeting is from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in Room 103 at the CNM Workforce Training Center, 5600 Eagle Rock Ave. NE in Albuquerque.

The preliminary report will detail Mathematica's extensive quantitative and comparative analysis of three health coverage models intended to close the uninsured gap in New Mexico. The presentation will cover Mathematica's study design, specifications for costing analyses, and the study's results to date.

Mathematica has been working on a short timeframe to analyze the costs of three different approaches to bring universal health care coverage to New Mexico. Their work began in December 2006. Following the preliminary report and presentation on April 26, Mathematica will report back to the committee on May 16, 2007 to present additional findings and on June 21, 2007 a final report will be offered to the committee.

"After a public discussion period this summer about the final report, the Committee's intention is to prepare a Universal Health Care model bill for Legislators to consider during the 2008 Legislative session," said Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish, Chair of the Committee.

The 23-member Committee and four advisors appointed by the Governor and the Legislative leadership selected these models from several presented to them last Autumn.

The analysis will consider the costs of the models to employers, the state, individuals and health care organizations weighing them against options such as taking no action at all. The three models take different approaches to providing a comprehensive health insurance or universal coverage for all New Mexicans. The models are:

1. The Health Security Act, which is a single plan administered by a commission appointed by the Governor;
2. The New Mexico Health Choices Plan, which is a market-based universal coverage plan that would utilize vouchers provided to individuals; and
3. The New Mexico Health Coverage Plan, which is also a market-based approach that preserves roles for both public and private health care systems and includes a requirement that everyone obtain insurance with a clear cut role for employers.

The April 26 committee meeting allows for public input. The meeting agenda is below:

(more)

AGENDA

- 9:00 – 9:15 a.m. Welcome, and approval of 10/19/06 & 11/30/06 minutes (Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish)
- 9:15 – 9:45 a.m. Discussion of the study design and how it differs from other approaches to costing of models (Dr. Deborah Chollet, Mathematica Policy Research Inc.)
- 9:45 – 10:15 a.m. Questions from committee members
- 10:15 – 11:00 a.m. Presentation of specifications for costing analyses for the current system and the three reform models (Dr. Deborah Chollet, Mathematica Policy Research Inc.)
- 11:00 – 11:15 a.m. BREAK
- 11:15 – 12:00 p.m. Questions from committee members
- 12:00 – 12:30 p.m. Public input
- 12:30 – 1:00 p.m. LUNCH BREAK
- 1:00 – 1:45 p.m. The study's cost results for New Mexico's current system (Dr. Deborah Chollet & Dr. Su Liu, Mathematica Policy Research Inc.)
- 1:45 – 2:30 p.m. Questions from committee members
- 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Report on the study's results to date and issues for the three reform models and what's next, including legal, economic and financial issues (Dr. Deborah Chollet & Dr. Su Liu, Mathematica Policy Research Inc.)
- 3:00 – 3:15 p.m. BREAK
- 3:15 – 4:00 p.m. Public input
- 4:00 – 4:45 p.m. Questions
- 4:45 – 5:00 p.m. Discussion of possible next steps - Meetings May 16 (Albuquerque) and June 21 (Santa Fe)
- 5:00 p.m. ADJOURN

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