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Public Employee Benefit Joint Purchasing Legislation Gets House Committee Approval

Bill Part of Governor Richardson's Health Reform Agenda

Santa Fe, New Mexico – A House of Representatives Committee this morning passed another piece of the Governor's Health Reform Agenda.

The House Health and Government Affairs Committee gave a "do pass" to **House Bill 662, Public Employees Benefit Option Health Care**, sponsored by Representative Danice Picraux. This legislation amends the Health Care Purchasing Act to require the Interagency Benefits Advisory Committee known as the IBAC agencies to integrate their health plan purchasing to increase their leverage in the marketplace, thereby reducing costs.

The four IBAC agencies include: The General Services Department, The Retiree Health Care Authority, the Albuquerque Public Schools and the Public Schools Insurance Authority. The IBAC agencies would have clear requirement to develop common health benefits for common populations and would be required to purchase together, not just *procure* together, to save costs and increase portability.

HB 662 now heads to the House Judiciary Committee for approval.

The Governor's package of 10 Health Care Reform bills focus on Electronic Medical Records, Consolidation of Public Coverage Programs, and Insurance Reform to increase access to coverage and quality health care for all New Mexicans.

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