

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF  
SANTA FE COUNTY  
RESOLUTION NO. 2018- 110**

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**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION IN THE 2019  
LEGISLATIVE SESSION TO AUTHORIZE THE PRACTICE OF  
DENTAL THERAPY AND GOVERN THE TRAINING AND  
LICENSURE OF DENTAL THERAPISTS IN NEW MEXICO**

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**WHEREAS**, a healthy community is a key goal for Santa Fe County (“County”); and

**WHEREAS**, the County has taken an active and strategic role in setting priorities for and funding health care; and

**WHEREAS**, dental care is strongly linked to overall health, with research showing associations between chronic oral infections and heart and lung diseases; stroke; diabetes; and low-birth-weight, and premature births; and

**WHEREAS**, Hispanic, Native American, and African American children bear the highest burden of dental disease and the highest learning consequences of dental problems, such as missed school days, lost sleep, and the inability to pay attention in the classroom; and

**WHEREAS**, as a practical matter, access to dental care is limited even for those who are insured, because of the lack of providers who accept Medicaid, the lack of full dental coverage for most people on Medicaid, the lack of dental coverage for people who have subsidized health plans through the Health Insurance Marketplace (“Exchange”), and the shortage of dentists in rural parts of Santa Fe County; and

**WHEREAS**, the County Health Care Assistance Program provides substantial funding for Federally Qualified Health Centers for dental services for indigent patients who lack dental insurance, including immigrants who have no access to dental insurance; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2016, the County committed \$50,000 to support the provision of free dental care by “New Mexico Mission of Mercy,” held at the Santa Fe Convention Center in April 2016, which provided over 1,000 County residents with free dental care, including dentures, root canals, and other procedures; and

**WHEREAS**, dental therapists are mid-level practitioners supervised by dentists and offer routine and preventive care, such as cleanings, fillings, and basic restorative care, and would provide care in more community settings across the County and the state; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Mexico Public Health Association has long supported legislation authorizing dental therapy, which has been in existence for over twelve years in Alaska and over

seven years in Minnesota, as well as more recently in several other states, including the neighboring state of Arizona; and

**WHEREAS**, Santa Fe Community College wants to offer dental therapist training; and

**WHEREAS**, training dental therapists will create livable wage jobs in local communities; and

**WHEREAS**, if enacted into law, dental therapy legislation would help address the significant shortage of dental practitioners and the lack of access to dental care for many County residents; and

**WHEREAS**, following the recommendation of the County Health Policy and Planning Commission, the Board of County Commissioners supported legislation in the 2017 legislative session that authorized the practice of dental therapy in the New Mexico.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of County Commissioners supports legislation in the 2019 Legislative Session that authorizes the practice of dental therapy in New Mexico, including the training and licensure of dental therapists.

**PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED THIS 9<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2018.  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

By: Anna Hansen  
Anna Hansen, Chair


ATTEST:  
Geraldine Salazar  
Geraldine Salazar, Santa Fe County Clerk

Date: 10/9/2018

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
R. Bruce Frederick  
R. Bruce Frederick, Santa Fe County Attorney

Date: 10/2/18

SFC CLERK  
RECORDED  
10/10/2018



COUNTY OF SANTA FE )  
STATE OF NEW MEXICO ) ss BCC RESOLUTIONS  
PAGES: 2

I Hereby Certify That This Instrument Was Filed for Record On The 10TH Day Of October, 2018 at 11:32:47 AM And Was Duly Recorded as Instrument # 1869740 Of The Records Of Santa Fe County



Witness My Hand And Seal Of Office  
Geraldine Salazar  
Deputy County Clerk, Santa Fe, NM

Estrella Martinez