



Agenda Item Number: 2008-4-8A

BERNALILLO COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Date: April 22, 2008

Department: County Manager Staff Contact: John Dantis, Deputy County Manager for Public Safety
Destry Hunt, Public Safety Liaison

TITLE: Support of Federal House Resolution 5698

ACTION: Motion to approve Administrative Resolution AR -2008 supporting the Federal HR5698 to remove the inmate limitations from Medicaid, Medicare, and SSI benefits for persons in custody pending disposition of charges.

SUMMARY:

Currently, 157 counties and state organizations nationwide have teamed with the National Association of Counties to lead the charge to pass a bill that will rescue counties from the unmanageable soaring medical and mental health costs that threaten to financially break counties all over the country.

The New Mexico Association of Counties has also coordinated an effort at the state level in support of NACO. It has garnered unprecedented cooperation among the counties in reaction to the unique problem New Mexico faces as a result of the Medicaid reform of 1997 that irreparably damaged the state's mental health safety net, thereby moving thousands of mentally ill into our jails that lack sufficient funding to serve their needs.

“Managed care had weakened the state’s mental health safety net, because a minimum of 60 facilities had closed since the implementation of Medicaid reform”
(Psychiatric Services, March 2003, Vol. 54, No. 3)

“Judges expressed their concerns about increasing numbers of Medicaid-eligible children and adults with serious mental illnesses who needed intensive services but were unable to obtain them under managed care. They stated that persons in need of treatment were instead placed in detention centers or prisons, which lacked adequate mental health care resources” *(personal communications, Honorable Geraldine Rivera, Second Judicial District Court, Mar 19, 2001; Honorable Alvin Jones, Fifth Judicial District Court, Mar 19, 2001)*

Staff requests adoption of a resolution supporting the U.S. House bill, Federal House Resolution 5698, that prohibits the federal government from removing individuals of their Medicare, Medicaid, SSI, and SCHIP benefits prior to being convicted.

ATTACHMENT:

1. Administrative Resolution **AR -2008**
2. Federal House Resolution 5698

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time.

STAFF ANALYSIS SUMMARY

COUNTY MANAGER

See Summary. I recommend Board approval. TL 4/17/2008

DEPUTY COUNTY MANAGER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

Approximately 20% of the inmates at the Metropolitan Detention Center fall within the criteria of this Federal Bill. They are indigent and unable to provide for themselves and need to stay connected to Medicaid services, whether in the community or in custody. I recommend approval of this item. J Dantis 4/15/08

LEGAL

The proposed action is within the Board's authority. JSL 4/10/08

FINANCE

Budget	Approval of this agenda item has no fiscal impact on the County. Julian F. Barela, Budget Administrator 04/11/08.
Purchasing	No comment required. Lisa Sedillo-White, Purchasing Director 4/16/08
Contracts	No comment required. Lisa Sedillo-White, Purchasing Director 4/16/08