



STATE OF NEW MEXICO
Human Services Department
Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham
Kari Armijo, Interim Acting Secretary
Alex Castillo Smith, Acting Deputy Secretary
Paul Ritzma, Acting Deputy Secretary
Lorelei Kellogg, Acting Medicaid Director

For Immediate Release

Feb.10, 2023

Contact: Marina I Piña
Director of Communications
NM Human Services Department
505.670.3264 | Marina.Pina@hsd.nm.gov

Human Services Department lauds passage of legislation to continue child support modernization through first committee
Changes to child support guidelines and medical support will benefit 177,000 parents and children in the Child Support Program

SANTA FE – The New Mexico Human Services Department (HSD) lauded the passage of Senate Bill 223 and Senate Bill 224 on a vote 5-0 from the Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee on Friday to help continue Child Support Program modernization efforts. Both bills are sponsored by Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez and Rep. Greg Nibert.

“We are seeking to improve the efficiencies of the program and eliminate barriers for child support customers – these pieces of legislation take us one step closer to maximizing financial support for children to allow them to grow up happy and healthy.” said **Kari Armijo**, HSD Acting Secretary.

Senate Bill 223 is designed to make it more efficient to update the child support guideline schedule based on economic data on the cost of raising a child. HSD is required to review the schedule every four years, and instead of having to go back to the Legislature to update the schedule, it can be updated through regulation which allows for public input and a public hearing.

“This legislation would assure continued compliance with federal rules and funding and update the child support guideline schedule on a timely manner,” said Sen. **Antoinette Sedillo Lopez**.

Senate Bill 224 amends the Mandatory Medical Support Act to eliminate the \$5 monthly charge parents seeking help from child support have to pay if their child is on Medicaid. HSD estimates the cost to establish and enforce a medical support order is approximately \$741, which would take a non-custodial parent 12 years and 3 months to reimburse the state for its administrative costs.

“This is a common-sense piece of legislation to update an outdated practice that costs more than it collects,” said Rep. **Greg Nibert**.

Senate Bill 223 and Senate Bill 224’s next stop is the Senate Judiciary Committee.

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The New Mexico Child Support Program has made a concerted effort since 2019 to modernize its program through programmatic and electronic initiatives that positively impact the families and children it serves and received the 2022 Excellence Award from the Western Intergovernmental Child Support Engagement Council (WICSEC) for making a difference through its modernization efforts.

The Human Services Department provides services and benefits to 1,076,746 New Mexicans through several programs including: the Medicaid Program, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Child Support Program, and several Behavioral Health Services.