

1 **CITY OF SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO**

2 **RESOLUTION NO. 2019-5**

3 **INTRODUCED BY:**

4
5 Councilor Renee D. Villarreal

6 Councilor Signe I. Lindell

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10 **A RESOLUTION**

11 **IN SUPPORT OF LEGISLATION IN THE 2019 LEGISLATIVE SESSION TO**
12 **AUTHORIZE THE PRACTICE OF DENTAL THERAPY AND GOVERN THE**
13 **TRAINING AND LICENSURE OF DENTAL THERAPISTS IN NEW MEXICO.**

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15 **WHEREAS**, a healthy community is a key goal for the City of Santa Fe; and

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

19 **WHEREAS**, Hispanic, Native American, and Black children bare the highest burden of
20 dental disease and the highest rate of learning consequences as a result of dental problems such as
21 missed school days, lost sleep, and the inability to pay attention in the classroom; and

22 **WHEREAS**, as a practical matter, access to dental care is limited even for those who are
23 insured because of the lack of providers who accept Medicaid, the lack of full dental coverage for
24 most people on Medicaid, the lack of dental coverage for people who have subsidized health
25 plans through the health exchange, and the shortage of dentists in rural parts of New Mexico; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in 2016, the City of Santa Fe hosted the New Mexico Mission of Mercy
2 program that provided no-cost dental care to over 1,000 Santa Fe County residents including
3 dentures, root canals, and other procedures; and

4 **WHEREAS**, CHRISTUS St. Vincent Hospital reported 334 emergency room visits in
5 2017 related to dental issues, costing an estimated \$640,278, or \$1917 per visit; and

6 **WHEREAS**, data from the 2017 Santa Fe City Youth Risk and Resiliency Survey found
7 that 24% of high schoolers and 28% of middle schoolers had not seen a dental provider in the past
8 12 months; and

9 **WHEREAS**, 14% of 3rd to 6th graders screened as part of the Santa Fe City Sealant
10 Program had active tooth decay at the time of the screening; and

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

14 **WHEREAS**, the New Mexico Public Health Association has long supported legislation
15 authorizing dental therapy, which has been permitted in Alaska for over twelve years and in
16 Minnesota for over seven years, as well as more recently in several other states, including
17 Arizona; and

18 **WHEREAS**, the Santa Fe Community College would like to offer dental therapist
19 training; and

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

22 **WHEREAS**, if enacted into law, dental therapy legislation would help address the
23 significant shortage of dental practitioners and the lack of access to dental care for many New
24 Mexico residents.

25 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE**

1 CITY OF SANTA FE that the Governing Body supports legislation in the 2019 Legislative
2 Session that authorizes the practice of dental therapy in New Mexico, including the training and
3 licensure of dental therapists.

4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this Resolution be forward to the Santa
5 Fe Legislative Delegation.

6 PASSED, APPROVED, AND ADOPTED this 9th day of January, 2019.

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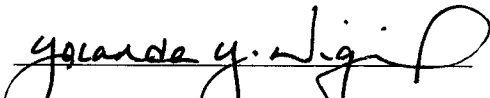
ALAN M. WEBBER, MAYOR

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11 ATTEST:

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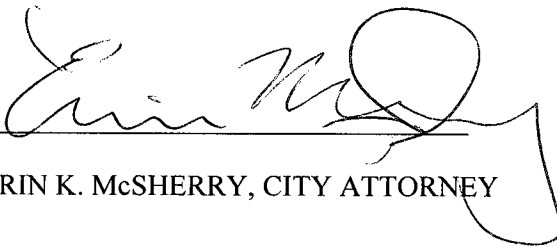

VOLANDA Y. VIGIL, CITY CLERK

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15 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

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ERIN K. McSHERRY, CITY ATTORNEY

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M/Legislation/Resolutions 2019/2019-5 Dental Therapy Legislation