



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

To Speaker Lujan and Senate Pro Tem Altamirano;

To Congressman Udall, our Native American and spiritual leaders;

To members of the Legislature, members of the Judiciary, and Democratic and Republican leaders

To the former Governors, distinguished guests, and our First Lady, my best friend and partner, Barbara Richardson

To the first woman elected and reelected Lt. Governor in New Mexico's history, Lt. Governor Diane Denish and her husband Herb Denish

To our men and women in uniform, especially our New Mexico National Guard.

And to my fellow New Mexicans: Thank you and welcome.

In his 1963 inauguration Jack Campbell said "No greater honor can come to a man than to be elected Governor of the state he loves." He was right. This is the greatest honor I've ever had.

Gracias a ustedes, los ciudadanos de Nuevo Mexico, por el privilegio a servirles otra vez.
Thank you, citizens of New Mexico, for the privilege to serve you once more

Four years ago today, when we met here in this place, New Mexico was a state mired in gridlock, stuck in neutral and at the bottom of too many lists.

However, our spirit was optimistic, our energies boundless, and our determination strong. We pulled together-Democrats and Republicans, Business and Government, Rural and Urban-the *people* of New Mexico- to move our state forward-to realize the full potential of our citizens.

I want to commend my colleagues in the Legislature for their deep commitment to the work of the people, and thank them for their partnership.

Today, New Mexico is a different place-- a growing vibrant state with a clear path to a brighter future. Together, we unleashed the innovation and power of the private sector by cutting taxes,

promoting job growth and investing directly in our communities, in our businesses, and in our people. Today, 83,000 more New Mexicans are working, and incomes are on the rise.

We cracked down on crime, drugs and drunk driving, and made our streets, neighborhoods and communities safer.

We made health insurance more affordable for small businesses, and guaranteed that every child under five can get quality health care.

We took giant steps towards transforming our schools into 21st century cathedrals of learning.

We've stayed true to our Western values, our belief in hard work and self-reliance, our respect for our land and water, our bonds of family and community, and our insistence on responsibility. And we've always remembered that our diverse heritage is our common strength.

Today confidence in our state is restored and our citizens' hope for the future is rekindled. The state of New Mexico is on the move, and in the right direction. We know that our best days are yet to come.

Still, many challenges remain. I don't have all the answers, and I don't believe every answer can be found in our state capitol. Our people know how to make New Mexico a better place, if we stop to listen.

All across our state, New Mexicans have shared their concerns, their ideas and their hopes for the future. I have listened and learned a great deal. People expect their leaders to understand the real problems affecting their lives. And expect them to work together to build real solutions. They want the peace of mind that their leaders are responsible and accountable.

They stand ready to do their part, we must do ours.

It starts with education-the cornerstone of opportunity. We made a lot of progress in our schools--expanding learning to thousands of 4 year olds, dramatically improving our ranking in teacher quality, and earning a top ten spot for high educational standards.

Still-we must do better.

For too long, some have believed that certain children can't learn. They have the wrong environment at home, the wrong attitude in class, or come from the wrong side of the poverty line. No more. We are living by a new belief matched by strong actions -a belief in ourselves, our educators, our parents, and in our children. We must demonstrate that it doesn't matter where you come from, every single child can learn. We must raise our expectations of them, and their expectations of themselves.

And we must keep building an educational system based on this belief.

That from Pre-Kindergarten to post-college every child is expected to learn- to be encouraged by caring parents, to be stimulated by great books, to be inspired by new technology, and to be challenged by high quality teachers.

And that every one is expected to achieve, to graduate and to succeed in the world of work.

Children must know that their teachers, their parents, their principals, their legislators, and their governor care deeply about their learning. That we expect them to achieve, and we hold ourselves accountable for their success.

Four years ago today, we demonstrated our commitment to education with a 6% increase in teacher salaries - tied to accountability measures. And we've consistently raised that salary each year. Those increases took us from 48th to 39th in the nation in teacher pay, dramatically boosted teacher quality, and improved education in the classroom.

Today, I propose that we renew our commitment to education in an unprecedented way-let's raise teacher's salaries by 7.4 percent, tie them to accountability, and move to 27th in the nation. We need to keep expanding opportunity beyond our schools.

New Mexico's lifeblood- *Nuestro Agua*-Our Water - must be protected to guarantee opportunity for this generation and every generation that follows.

Too many New Mexico families have their home budget stretched and their opportunities limited, by poor health and no health care.

Step-by-step, year by year, working with the private sector we must extend affordable health care to every New Mexican.

And for those who suffer from cancer, diabetes and Alzheimer's we must give them hope and unlock the potential of stem cell research.

Most of all, I believe opportunity means creating new jobs--- jobs of the next economy.

Our world is changing--a warming climate is a threat to our water, our livelihood, and our quality of life.

And while the federal government has done little on global warming, New Mexico has stepped forward to take the lead.

We became the first state to join the Chicago Climate Exchange and mandated some of the toughest goals in the nation to reduce our carbon emissions.

But, this threat also opens new opportunities.

New Mexico already leads the country as a clean energy state- and it's time to go further.

Now, we must move our economy from limited oil resources, to the unlimited resources of wind, biomass, geothermal and solar.

We can go from being an exporter of fossil fuels, to being an exporter of renewable energy. We can and must build a whole new economy based on clean renewable energy.

And if we keep our taxes low and fair, keep creating a workforce of the best and the brightest, and keep protecting our beautiful land.

I believe we will sustain the highest job growth in our history. More quality companies will come here, start here and stay here.

No longer will our children leave to find opportunity. Opportunity will keep coming to New Mexico. Businesses will choose to become part of our growing, high-tech economy. And they will come to give their employees a better place to raise their families. To sustain this opportunity economy, we must maintain fiscal discipline and keep a responsible balanced budget. Four years ago, I promised to cut \$90 million dollars in government waste and we cut \$230 million instead.

We held the line on spending and returned over \$1 billion dollars in taxes to hard-working middle-class New Mexicans. Today, we are blessed with record budget reserves, the largest in state history. We must continue to manage our budgets prudently, keep cutting taxes to build our economy, and maintain our savings for future generations.

As a state, we made the tough decision to use our permanent school fund and invest in the quality of our teaching and our teachers. It's paying off for our schools and our students. And our permanent funds have never been stronger - up \$4.5 billion dollars in four years.

And last, people expect and deserve a government that's honest and honorable. The scandal of the treasurer's office has passed, but its lessons have not. There is a time for meaningful ethics reform, and that time is now.

With a more efficient and accountable government, a growing economy, and strong permanent funds- New Mexico's future is bright. And her most prosperous days are yet to come.

This vision for New Mexico is based on a simple agreement, a commitment to each other that a responsible government must expand opportunity, while demanding accountability.

We as a people, as a state, as a community, have too much promise, too much potential, and too much at stake to go any other way than forward.

We are too strong in our hearts, too innovative in our minds and too firm in our beliefs to retreat from our dreams.

I believe that together, we can make New Mexico a place where every child can get a sound education, grow up safe and healthy, find a good paying job, be near their families and build their dreams.

My fellow New Mexicans, let's keep making that place. Our new beginning is today and our best days start tomorrow. Because for New Mexico---the best is yet to come.

Que Dios Bendiga, el gran estado de Nuevo Mexico. God Bless the great state of New Mexico.
Thank you.

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