

April 6, 2007

SENATE EXECUTIVE MESSAGE NO. 81

The Honorable Ben D. Altamirano
President Pro Tempore
New Mexico Senate
State Capitol Bldg.
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Honorable President Pro Tempore Altamirano and members of the Senate:

Pursuant to the Constitution of the State of New Mexico, Article IV, Section 22, I hereby VETO and return SENATE BILL 365, as amended, without emergency clause, which was enacted during the Forty-Eighth Legislature, First Session, 2007.

The City of Albuquerque's use of red-light cameras to assess civil fines for traffic violations has successfully resulted in fewer accidents at critical intersections – a key public-safety goal for the city.

The goal of the bill was to cap fines and divert a portion of the fees to other state services. However, I must veto Senate Bill 365 because, intended or not, this bill would have jeopardized the City of Albuquerque's attempt to reduce traffic accidents at intersections. By diverting money to the state, this bill would have had the effect of killing Albuquerque's program.

This program has proven to be effective in making Albuquerque's streets safer by reducing accidents at intersections and protecting the lives of all other drivers who follow the law. I see no reason for the state to micromanage this program and jeopardize the impressive results in order to fund other programs.

But however worthy this program is, I believe the graduated system of fines for violators is unreasonably high and should be reduced. The Mayor and City Council should keep this program, but reconsider the fines and adopt something more reasonable that still serves as a deterrent for violating traffic laws.

Accordingly, signature of this bill is not appropriate at this time.

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Respectfully yours,



Bill Richardson

Governor

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