

# **State of New Mexico**

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
*Governor*

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### **GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON AND THREE FORMER GOVERNORS ENDORSE IDEA OF SECRETARY OF EDUCATION**

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson was joined today by three former New Mexico governors who share his views on a resolution creating a Secretary of Education. Governor Bill Richardson said he wants a strong Secretary of Education who won't be encumbered by a Policy-making State Board of Education.

Governor Bill Richardson gave the following statement today:

I'm happy to report that we're one step away from giving New Mexico voters the opportunity to radically change the way our schools are governed. As you all may know, a joint resolution creating a Secretary of Education has cleared both the House and Senate, and is now in a conference committee to work out the differences.

Unfortunately the resolution, as passed by the House over the weekend, is unacceptable to me – and I believe unacceptable to voters who want real education reform. Remember, it's the voters who will either accept or reject – veto, if you will – this proposed constitutional amendment. Let's give them what they want. Let's give them a strong Education Secretary who is not encumbered by a policy-making State Board of Education.

If we must have a board, I prefer an advisory commission with no policy-making powers. That's my compromise on behalf of voters who clearly indicated during last year's campaign that they are tired of the status quo.

Real reform means accountability. As Governor, I am accountable to the people. So is the Legislature. We were elected to fix our broken educational system. What I propose holds me – working with the Legislature -- directly accountable for our schools' performance.

We don't need a policy-making Board standing in the way of school reform.

I've invited three former governors – Jerry Apodaca, Toney Anaya and Garrey Carruthers – to join me today in calling on the Legislature to strip the language dealing with a policy-making board from the resolution.

Each one of these Governors made considerable strides toward improving the education system. But they could only do so much because their hands were tied. They fought an uphill battle against an education bureaucracy that is accountable to no one.

I don't want to fight that same battle again. I want the Legislature – and ultimately the voters – to give me the tools to effectively reform public schools.

I'd like the governors to say a few words now.

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