

For immediate release
5/28/03

Contact: Gilbert Gallegos
505.476.2217

JUDGE UPHOLDS GOVERNOR BILL RICHARDSON'S POWER TO REPLACE BOARD MEMBER WITH HIS OWN APPOINTEE

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson scored a victory in court when State District Judge Susan Conway upheld the governor's authority to remove a member of the New Mexico Public Accountancy Board who was appointed by the prior administration.

Governor Richardson had removed board member Caroline Roberts from the accountancy board shortly after taking office in January. The governor subsequently replaced Roberts with his own appointee.

Roberts filed a lawsuit in state District Court in Albuquerque seeking an explanation for her removal, and asking the court to reinstate her to the board. Judge Conway on May 27 dismissed Roberts' lawsuit, saying Governor Richardson has the authority to remove Roberts who was a holdover appointment from the last administration. Judge Conway also stated that she did not have jurisdiction to force the governor to explain the removal.

"This decision reinforces my authority with regard to removing and appointing members of certain boards," Governor Bill Richardson said.

By statute, the accountancy board regulates the practice of public accountancy.

The Attorney General's Office presented arguments to the court on behalf of the Governor's Office.

#30#