

Immediate Release
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Governor Richardson's Goals for Special Session
Toughen Sexual Predator Laws
Adopt his "Opportunity Now" Economic Growth Package that cuts
taxes and creates thousands of new jobs

Santa Fe: Governor Bill Richardson today reiterated his goals for the special session. "I will call the legislature into session Monday, October 27, 2003 at noon.

"These are my goals for the special session. One: Toughen our sexual predator laws to better protect our citizens. Two: Pass my comprehensive fiscally responsible economic growth package called 'Opportunity Now'. I believe that working together in a bipartisan manner with the interests of the state in mind, we can continue the tremendous progress we are making on building a high-wage economy, creating jobs and making our communities and neighborhoods safer against sexual predators," Governor Richardson said.

1: Pass tough, effective Sexual Predator laws

Sexual predator laws must be toughened and strengthened, loopholes closed and our citizens protected, especially our children. This is not a partisan issue and I am asking both parties to stop posturing and pass this package.

- Here's what I'm proposing:
 - One, mandatory minimum sentence for criminal sexual penetration in the second-degree. This is hard jail time. I will not tolerate sexual offenders on the streets threatening New Mexicans.
 - Two, create a Sex Offender Management Board.
 - Three, pass a new law extending parole for sex offenders.
 - Four, pass a new law forcing sex offenders to stay on probation longer.
 - Five, create a new class of crimes for a sex offense against a child.
 - Six, increase penalties for kidnapping of a child involving a sexual offense.

Sex Offender Board

- You may remember last month that the friends of Marissa Mathy-Zvaifler, the teen-ager who was killed by a sex offender at the Sunshine Theater in Albuquerque, recommended that the state create a committee to deal with sex crimes and convicted offenders. Many others have recommended a similar concept. That's what we're doing-creating a sex-offender board.

- This board will have real teeth. Among other things, the board will develop a standard procedure for evaluation and ID of convicted sex offenders. It will develop standards for treatment programs; create a screen program to assist in the screening of sex offenders; and develop guidelines for tracking sex offenders.
- This board will also review the Sex Offender Notification and Registration Act and recommend changes if necessary.
- I am also considering legislation that would ensure that any person convicted of a sex crime against a child could NOT work for state government. I was deeply disappointed when I highway department employee we fired for that very reason was reinstated because of actions taken during the Johnson Administration. This should not happen.
- The board will be instructed to prepare proposals for the January session that will forever close the loophole pointed out in the recent court ruling in Roswell that will force homeless sex offenders to register and notify local law enforcement of their whereabouts

2. An economic growth package called “Opportunity Now”

We stand a pivotal time. I will propose a two-part Economic Opportunity/Growth package that cuts taxes, creates jobs and grows our economy and prepares us for a brighter more prosperous future.

Part one is a tax cut package that allows us to build on our unprecedented success this year. New Mexico is now among the leaders in job growth. We have the third largest budget reserve in the country. We are one of a handful of states with a balanced budget. New Mexico exports have doubled to Mexico, from 53 to 104 million, and increased 330% to South Korea, rising 174 million dollars.

I will propose a fiscally responsible economic growth tax-cut package that will include:

- Cutting taxes for seniors,
- Developing an incentive package for small businesses that rewards paying higher wages and reduces pyramiding,
- Provide tax relief for lower and middle-income, working families,
- Excluding one time sporting events and concerts from gross receipts taxes--- ending the gross receipts taxes on doctors contracted with health providers.

Part two is a statewide transportation plan called “GRIP,” Governor Richardson’s Investment Partnership benefits both rural and urban New Mexicans and will generate more than 8,000 new jobs per year for the next eight years and will employ hundreds of New Mexico companies.

GRIP has been endorsed by over 100 New Mexico business and community organizations. GRIP is a bipartisan, broad based solution to our transportation needs that

is supported by both rural and urban interests. I am providing a list of endorsing organizations.

The time to act is now and I want a bipartisan consensus to pass this in the special session.

This is what passage of GRIP will mean to New Mexico:

- Create 8,000 new jobs annually for the next 6 to 8 years. That's 50,000-60,000 new jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars in salaries
- Improve safety on our roads. Last year alone, we had 450 traffic fatalities on our roads. That's 450 too many.
- GRIP's overall economic impact in New Mexico is \$8.4 billion dollars.
- Employ hundreds of New Mexico businesses.
- Generate nearly \$100 million in additional gross receipt taxes and millions more in payroll, personal and corporate income taxes.
- GRIP is designed so that New Mexico businesses and New Mexico contractors will do the majority of the work to keep our jobs and our money in state.
- GRIP will improve our highways and allow us to develop and improve other modes of transportation such as air service, rail service and park-and-ride programs.

To keep our budget balanced and avoid critical cuts in needed programs, I will work closely with the legislature to finance these important economic growth initiatives.