

Immediate Release  
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**Governor Richardson Calls For Immediate Passage of DWI Bill  
Reacts to Court of Appeals Ruling  
Governor Says Bill Signed Based on AG Advice**

Santa Fe: Governor Richardson today announced that he would seek immediate passage of the DWI bill overturned by the Court of Appeals this week. "I will ask the legislature in my State of the State to immediately pass the DWI bill and send it to my desk before the end of the first week of the legislative session. We cannot wait on the courts to act," Governor Richardson said. "I will continue to push, as my top legislative priority, the comprehensive DWI legislation that I announced last week. We must make the guilty pay, get the chronic DWI criminals off our streets and protect our children by punishing anyone who gives them alcohol," Governor Richardson said.

"The court ruling was a travesty and I strongly support an appeal. I have instructed my legal counsel to obtain permission to file an amicus brief with the court. The ruling wrongly thwarts the clear will of the legislature, my office and the people of New Mexico who overwhelmingly support a toughening of our DWI laws. Voiding the law on a technicality sends the wrong message to DWI offenders who have used the courts to avoid sentencing and to allowed them to go unpunished," Governor Richardson said.

"I was flabbergasted at the comments of the AG last night regarding the court ruling. Not only did she advise me to sign the bill, but also, my office has never received a formal request from the AG to correct the law or to place it on the call for last year's special legislative session. I signed the bill only after consultation and agreement from the Office of the Attorney General that my action would not jeopardize the implementation of the law," Governor Richardson said.

"Regardless of the current situation, the time to act is now and the people expect the DWI law to be passed and enforced," Governor Richardson said.

"It is disheartening that the Attorney General feels the need to point fingers, especially when she is pointing in the wrong direction. The Attorney General never informed the Governor's Office of any problem with the signing order of the bills in question. To the contrary, the Governor signed the DWI bill based on the advice received by lawyers from the AG's office. Now in the face of a court loss, the Attorney General is looking to place blame. If it were a legal mistake worthy of correction, one would think the highest attorney for the State of New Mexico would alert the Governor. The Attorney General never contacted him about it. Nor did she ask him to fix it in the special session," Billy Sparks, Communications Director said.

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