



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Appoints Retired Army Major Tom Baca as new State Aviation Director

Santa Fe- Governor Bill Richardson today announced his appointment of Retired Army Major Tom Baca as the state's new Aviation Director. Baca, a native of Albuquerque, is a highly decorated Army helicopter and fixed wing pilot and has flown as a commercial pilot since 1983.

"Tom Baca's extensive aviation experience, understanding of the airline industry, and familiarity with New Mexico's flying community have prepared him very well for this new challenge," said Governor Bill Richardson. "Tom will be the point person as we continue to promote and grow air service across the state, and internationally."

Baca has flown corporate aircraft for PNM, the Galles Racing Team, Raytheon Corporation and other companies in New Mexico. He has over 10,000 hours flight time in all types of aircraft. During two tours of duty in Vietnam, Baca was awarded the Soldiers Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star and 38 Air Medals.

"He's a true war hero- a leader who bravely, and selflessly served his country, and we're privileged to have him in State Government," added Governor Richardson.

Baca, a graduate of the University of Southern Colorado, said, "I appreciate Governor Richardson's faith in me to work with our aviation community to make New Mexico an aviation friendly state. We know that economic development in our rural communities will be more successful by developing good aviation infrastructure and air service. I will

work with Transportation Secretary Rhonda Faught, to make our airports the best in the west.”

The New Mexico State Aviation Division has been charged by Governor Richardson to pursue and develop scheduled air service to Mexico, increase intrastate flying in New Mexico, and increase air cargo opportunities in New Mexico. The Division is also responsible for registering all aircraft based in the state and license aircraft dealers.

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