



# State of New Mexico

*Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
*Governor*

## **First Lady Barbara Richardson Announces Domestic Violence Initiatives for upcoming Legislature**

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SANTA FE- First Lady Barbara Richardson made the following remarks today at a news conference.

“Over the last two years, I have traveled throughout the state highlighting the need to strengthen our domestic violence laws to better protect our citizens and to provide assistance to victims.

I am pleased to announce today a set of proposals to be presented to the legislature that, when adopted, will make New Mexico a national leader in addressing the harsh realities of domestic violence.

First, we need to understand the depth of the problem we are facing.

Domestic violence-related homicides in New Mexico had been averaging 12 to 15 deaths per year. In 2004 there were 34 homicides, more than double the previous year’s total. The year-end domestic violence homicide in Cloudcroft, where a pregnant woman and Otero County Sheriff’s Deputy were murdered is a prime example of how domestic violence impacts all of us.

A few weeks ago, on December 22, representatives from the Governor's office, along with service providers, participated in a KOAT-TV call-in show addressing domestic violence. The hotline was tremendously successful, and referred numerous victims to services in their communities.

In 2003, there were more than 25,000 DV calls to police. We know that approximately only 1 in 7 incidents of domestic violence is actually reported to police.

I am proud to report that the Governor's budget has a total allocation of over 6.5 million dollars for domestic violence programs, including \$600,000 for shelters.

### **Domestic Violence Legislation**

The Governor's comprehensive legislative package will deal with:

1. Cyber-stalking
2. Criminal damage to property
3. Increased penalties for battery against a household member
4. Required documentation of a domestic violence incident; and
5. Keeping the address of a victim confidential

Representatives Al Park, Mimi Stewert, Danice Picraux and Gail Beam will sponsor the legislation, and I want to personally thank them for their support and continued commitment to reducing domestic violence.”