



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

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## **Tougher Sex-Offender Law goes into effect on Friday**

*Increased access to health care and new judgeships among 66 laws that take effect July 1*

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson said a crackdown on sex offenders will start Friday when a tougher law with more teeth, increased penalties and better enforcement, goes into effect. Changes to New Mexico's Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act – making it one of the toughest laws in the nation – go into effect, along with 65 other new laws, on July 1.

“New Mexicans want and deserve to be safe from sexual predators,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “Our top priority is to lock sexual predators up for as long as possible. Now, law enforcement and the public will have the tools to keep better track of convicted predators who have the potential to attack again.”

The changes to the law (**HB 165**), pushed by Governor Richardson and sponsored by Rep. Hector Balderas, make it easier to track sex offenders using a new tracking system with lifetime registration every 90 days for the worst offenders; includes new crimes on the registration list; increases penalties to put real teeth in the enforcement; and adds notification of employers.

### **Health Care**

Several other laws (**HB 394, HB 335, HB 289, SB 271, HB 523**) that increase access to health insurance also go into effect July 1. Governor Richardson worked with legislators to pass a package of bills that will help decrease the number of New Mexicans without medical insurance, which stands at 414,000. The bills, which were signed into law, are part of Governor Bill Richardson's *Insure New Mexico!* initiatives.

### **Judges**

Another new law (**HB 901**) aimed at lessening the workload and ensuring that more DWI and domestic violence cases are in the state's busiest courts, also takes effect July 1.

Governor Richardson worked with Rep. Henry "Kiki" Saavedra and other legislators to create 8 new judgeships, including 3 new Magistrate positions, across the state.

Governor Richardson, during his State of the State Address this year, called this the "Year of the Judiciary" because of the focus on law enforcement, including DWI and sexual offender laws, and more support for the judicial system.

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