



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Governor Bill Richardson Signs Bills That Provide More Resources to Prevent and Treat HIV/AIDS

Governor also signs legislation making the hot air balloon the official "state aircraft"

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SANTA FE- Governor Bill Richardson today signed two bills that dedicate more resources to the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Senate Bill 313 creates a 23-member Governor's HIV and AIDS Policy Commission. The commission will review and make recommendations on state Department of Health policies and the adequacy of services for persons with HIV and AIDS, serve as a planning and advisory group to the department's HIV and AIDS programs, and annually provide evaluation and recommendations to the department. Senate Bill 314, known as the "Billy Griego HIV and AIDS Act", creates a 7-member advisory committee to review policies regarding how drugs are approved and used to fight HIV/AIDS, and coordinate statewide programs in this area. State Senator Phil Griego sponsored the bill in honor of his late brother Billy, who died from AIDS.

"In numerous other states, people are dying while waiting for their AIDS medications," said Governor Richardson. "That is not happening in New Mexico. This legislation reinforces New Mexico as a leader in the nation for its support of HIV and AIDS patients."

The Governor also signed Senate Bill 13, sponsored by State Senator Steve Komadina, which makes the hot air balloon the official state aircraft.

“I would argue that the image of a hot air balloon, with the Sandia Mountains or Red Rock State Park in the background, is what most people around the world identify with New Mexico,” said Governor Richardson. “This also makes sense as we ramp up our efforts to boost tourism in New Mexico.”

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