



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For Immediate Release
November 8, 2005

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Rio Arriba County Magistrate Appointee Withdraws Before Taking Office

David Valdez fails to disclose child support contempt action

SANTA FE- Rio Arriba County Magistrate appointee David Valdez today informed the Governor's Office that he was withdrawing his name and would not be able to serve. Valdez admitted that in 1983 he had been found in contempt of court and had been punished for failure to pay child support, but did not disclose that information prior to his appointment. Governor Bill Richardson last week announced his intention to appoint Valdez to the position after reviewing a list of qualified candidates offered by a search committee named to assist in the selection of a new Magistrate for Rio Arriba County.

Valdez misled the Governor's Office by not disclosing the information on his appointment application and lied about it when questioned by Vince Ward, Deputy Chief Counsel for the Governor. Furthermore, a background check of electronic law enforcement and court databases revealed no indication that such an incident had been reported to the state.

Valdez had not yet taken the oath of office or received a letter of appointment from the Governor.

Governor Richardson will review all options concerning filling the vacant Magistrate position.

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