



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Honors New Mexico Veterans During Ceremony In Las Cruces

Governor pays tribute to fallen Las Cruces soldier Army Pfc. Mario A. Reyes

LAS CRUCES- Governor Bill Richardson today joined members of New Mexico's congressional delegation and other dignitaries to honor New Mexico Veterans in a ceremony at Las Cruces memorial Park. The event included the official dedication of the new Veterans Memorial Wall, which displays the names of the 6,395 residents of Doña Ana County who served in the armed forces from the Civil War to the Vietnam War.

"To all our veterans - I have a simple message -- thank you -- all of you, for your service," said Governor Richardson. "Thank you for your selfless sacrifice in peacetime and war, for our state, for our nation and throughout the world."

The Governor expressed his condolences and presented a New Mexico flag to the family of Army Pfc. Mario A. Reyes, who was killed Monday in Iraq. The flag the Governor presented to the family had flown at half-staff over the State Capitol in honor of Pfc. Reyes.

"We must not -- we will not -- forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives so that we may continue to live in freedom," added Governor Richardson.

The Governor noted that New Mexico has always answered the nation's call to duty in times of crisis and war, and paid tribute to the nearly 200,000 veterans who live in New Mexico.

Governor Richardson's efforts made New Mexico the first state in the nation to provide National Guard troops with a \$250,000 life insurance policy. That amount has since been raised to \$400,000.