



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For Immediate Release
Oct. 4, 2005

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Governor Bill Richardson Urges U.S. Commerce Secretary to Help Eliminate Mexican Cement Tariff

Cement and Concrete Shortages Impacting Important New Mexico Construction

(Santa Fe, NM) – New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson met yesterday with U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez to urge that import tariffs on Mexican cement be lifted. Governor Richardson discussed the negative impacts cement shortages are having on important New Mexico private and public construction projects.

“Eliminating this obsolete tariff will help protect New Mexico jobs and keep our economy moving,” said Governor Richardson. “This shortage is threatening our construction industry, a vital engine of economic growth.”

New Mexico and other states are currently experiencing cement and concrete shortages affecting both the price and scheduling of construction projects.

The tariff on Mexican cement was instituted in 1990 to prevent dumping of inexpensive foreign cement into the United States market.

“International and domestic cement markets have changed dramatically in the last 15 years,” said Governor Richardson. “Demand from booming Asian construction markets, tsunami recovery, and hurricane reconstruction in the United States are spreading world supplies very thin. We need to get this Mexican cement flowing north to keep our construction projects on schedule.”

Secretary Gutierrez assured Governor Richardson that he would work with Mexican officials to eliminate this tariff. He informed the Governor that binational talks on this issue are currently ongoing. Secretary Gutierrez also agreed to keep Governor Richardson informed as these talks progress.

Governor Richardson joined Governors Jon Huntsman of Utah, Kenny Guinn of Nevada and Mike Rounds of South Dakota in jointly asking Secretary Gutierrez for help on this issue in August.