



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

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Governor

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New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, Utah Governor Jon Huntsman Join in Bipartisan Effort to Promote Western States Primary

SANTA FE – Democratic New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson and Republican Utah Governor Jon Huntsman met today to discuss bipartisan Western Governor’s support for creating a “Western States” Presidential Primary in 2008.

“We are proud to be joining forces with New Mexico in a bipartisan effort to make sure that Western states and Western issues are addressed in the presidential primaries,” Governor Huntsman said. “We are focused on February 5th as the date for the 2008 primary.”

The Governors also met with Utah and New Mexico legislative and political leaders. This effort builds upon New Mexico’s successful 2004 Democratic presidential caucus. This first-ever caucus led to more than 50 candidate visits and millions of dollars spent in advertisements with local newspapers and television outlets. More than one hundred thousand New Mexicans voted in the caucus.

“Western issues will take center stage and the citizens of the West will play a major role, long overdue in selecting our next President,” Governor Richardson said. “This effort will bring our issues: water, land, energy, immigration, economic development, education and border security to the forefront.

“In the past, former Western Governors, Democratic Governor Roy Romer of Colorado in the mid nineties and later Republican Governor Mike Leavitt of Utah advocated for a Western Primary,” Governor Richardson said. “But, it never happened largely because it did not have bipartisan support. Today, because of this strong showing of bipartisan support, I believe it will become a reality.”

Both Governors also emphasized that this Western Primary would be scheduled in a second tier of primaries, and would not conflict with the history and tradition of the New Hampshire Primary or Iowa Caucuses.