



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
Governor

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### **Governor Bill Richardson to discuss possible Gas and Home Heating Relief Special Session with legislative leaders**

*Governor Richardson will also ask Oil & Gas industry to help vulnerable New Mexicans during winter months*

SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson will meet with legislative leaders this week before deciding whether to call a special Gas and Home Heating Relief Special Session. A decision is expected this week.

“People are hurting,” Governor Bill Richardson said. “I am seriously considering calling a special session to pass a comprehensive gas and home heating relief package that puts money back in peoples’ pockets. Like most New Mexicans, I am outraged that ordinary citizens are shouldering most of the burden of extremely high gasoline and home heating costs. I expect the State of New Mexico to help ease that burden. The Oil and Gas industry should help as well – in a meaningful way.

“I am also prepared to pass an aggressive anti-price gouging law that punishes companies that exploit the public by charging unreasonable prices at the gas pumps, especially following tragedies like Hurricane Katrina,” Governor Richardson said. “Nobody should profit on other peoples’ pain.”

Governor Richardson called on the oil and gas industry to share the burden of protecting New Mexicans, especially the elderly and the most vulnerable citizens, against unprecedented gasoline prices and impending home heating costs that are expected to increase by at least 50 percent.

Governor Richardson said he is exploring several options for a possible special session, including:

1. Putting money back in the pockets of every New Mexican – either in the form of a **gasoline price rebate**, or temporarily **suspending the gasoline sales tax**.
2. Provide **cash relief for more than 60,000 low-income and elderly people with their heating bills** – just in time for the winter months. The Governor is considering a plan to increase funding to the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, or LIHEAP.

3. Pass the **toughest possible anti-gouging law** to give New Mexico the ability to investigate and punish companies that may be taking advantage of tragedies like hurricanes or other natural disasters.
4. Provide **emergency cash for public schools and the New Mexico Department of Public Safety** to cover increases in gasoline and transportation costs.

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