



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

For Immediate Release
September 20, 2005

Contact: Gilbert Gallegos
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2217

Governor Bill Richardson calls Special Session, proposes \$100 million “Gas and Home Heating Relief” Package

Special Session scheduled for Oct. 5 – Governor calls on Oil & Gas Industry to pitch in \$50 million

SANTA FE - Governor Bill Richardson today announced plans to call legislators into a special session starting Oct. 5. Governor Richardson said he will work with legislators to pass a \$100 million “Gas and Home Heating Relief” package that includes four components:

1. \$75 million to provide cash refunds to every New Mexico taxpayer to help with high gasoline prices.
2. \$20 million in cash relief to more than 60,000 low-income and elderly people. This relief will help the most vulnerable New Mexicans pay their heating bills. The average eligible household will receive \$450 to help directly with home heating costs.
3. 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.
4. Provide \$3 million in emergency assistance to school districts and the Department of Public Safety to pay for increased transportation costs due to high gasoline prices.

“This package is the equivalent of giving more than six months of gas taxes back to taxpayers,” Governor Richardson said during a news conference today at a gas station.

“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.”

Governor Richardson also called on the Oil and Gas industry to pitch in \$50 million that could be used to bolster the “Gas and Home Heating Relief” package. The additional money from the industry would help expand access to home heating relief to more low-income New Mexicans and provide larger rebate checks to all taxpayers.

“I am also calling on the Oil and Gas Industry to pitch in \$50 million to maximize relief for New Mexico families,” Governor Richardson said. “Oil companies like Exxon are made nearly \$25-billion in profits last year, while Exxon’s CEO is earning a \$26 million salary. They can afford to help consumers.”

Governor Richardson's Gasoline Rebate Plan

- Governor Richardson is calling a special session to ask the Legislature to approve an immediate, one-time tax rebate for all New Mexicans.
- Governor Richardson is proposing \$75 million dollars to provide relief to all New Mexico taxpayers.
- Rebate amounts would be based on family size – bigger households would get a bigger rebate; but every New Mexican would get significant tax relief.
- A low income family of four would qualify for \$175 and larger families could qualify for \$200.
- This package is the equivalent of giving more than six months of state gas taxes back to taxpayers.
- Rebate checks would be issued automatically to everyone who filed a New Mexico income tax return for 2004.
- For many families the state rebate will buy over a month's worth of heating fuel or gasoline.
- Advance rebates would be calculated from data submitted on 2004 New Mexico personal income tax returns.
- However, New Mexicans who don't receive a check in the mail this fall could apply for their rebate on their 2005 tax return.

#30#