



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

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Governor Bill Richardson Announces MRCOG Director Will Oversee Operation of Region 3 Housing Authority

Governor's action follows resignation of Executive Director

ALBUQUERQUE -- Governor Bill Richardson today announced that Mid-Region Council of Governments Executive Director Lawrence Rael will temporarily assume control of the day-to-day operations of Region 3 Housing Authority New Mexico, Inc., following the August 1 resignation of the Executive Director for Region III, Vincent "Smiley" Gallegos.

"We are taking action to stabilize the finances and practices of Region III and ensure that it continues to fulfill its mission of providing affordable housing for low income New Mexicans," said Governor Richardson. "The regional authorities must operate transparently, and in the best interests of the people it serves."

In April Governor Richardson directed the Board of Finance to conduct a review of all regional housing authorities in New Mexico following allegations of the imposition of questionable fees. In June Governor Richardson ordered a comprehensive performance and management review of Region III after the authority failed to meet the deadline for payment on a \$2.5 million bond. Preliminary findings from that analysis reveal violations of the agreement that Region III Housing Authority New Mexico, Inc. signed with the State Investment Council and possible violations of the Regional Housing Authority Act.

Region III Housing Authority New Mexico, Inc. is one of seven regional housing authorities in the state that help low income New Mexicans find affordable housing.

Lawrence Rael will serve in this capacity while the Board of Directors of Region III searches for a new Executive Director.

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