



# State of New Mexico

## *Office of the Governor*

**Bill Richardson**  
*Governor*

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## **Governor Richardson Announces Border Security Legislative Package**

Santa Fe: Governor Richardson today announced a package of proposals designed to continue his border security initiative and maintain a high level of support for border counties and communities. The Governor is also asking to hire eight additional employees to man the emergency operations center in preparation of what could be a tough fire season.

Governor will propose to the legislature:

ONE: Two million dollars to support and equip and continue to fund additional local law enforcement personnel on the border.

TWO: Two point five million for the establishment of a State Disaster Mobilization Center in the Albuquerque area as a staging area and for the distribution of critical, life-saving supplies like water and medicine during emergencies and a training facility for first responders

THREE: Hire eight additional Office of Emergency Management, (OEM) personnel

### **The following are Governor Richardson's prepared remarks regarding the border proposals:**

"I declared a Border Emergency on August 18<sup>th</sup> last year. As I said then, Border Security is a federal issue. Protecting New Mexicans is my issue.

At that time, in addition to the \$750,000.00 I made available for increased border security, I allocated one million dollars in federal funds to allow local law enforcement to hire additional law enforcement personnel and to help protect our border.

These funds were used to hire and equip up to 18 new officers.

In December I extended the Emergency Period and authorized additional funding to continue the increased New Mexico State police presence on the border.

I am proposing in this year's budget two million dollars to continue the state's support of our local communities and border counties.

I promised when I declared the emergency that I would continue to support their efforts and not forget our border communities.

These additional funds will allow the program to continue and expand.

After my meetings with Secretary Chertoff, the United States Department of Homeland Security pledged an additional 265 agents would be assigned to the Mexico – New Mexico border. This process takes time and I want our communities to be protected and the additional officers brought on to remain on duty.

The money will be allocated through the New Mexico Homeland Security Office directly to the four border counties, Hidalgo, Luna, Dona Ana and Grant Counties and communities.

Secondly, I am proposing 2.5 million dollars to purchase a dedicated facility for the New Mexico Disaster Mobilization Center.

If there is one lesson we all should have learned from Hurricane Katrina, saving time saves lives. By creating a Disaster Mobilization Center close to the airport and interstates, we can cut as much as one day off the time it will take to distribute life saving supplies such as water, food and medicine to New Mexican victims during an emergency.

The facility will be used as a staging area during emergencies, a training center for first responders; will be the primary base of operations for New Mexico Task Force One, the state's urban search and rescue team which recently returned from service in Louisiana and Houston after the Hurricanes.

I hope we never have to face a natural disaster, a chemical, biological or nuclear attack, but I want to assure every New Mexican that we are doing everything we can to be prepared.

Third, we just saw in Hobbs the potential this year for an increase in fires that could threaten our communities and our forests. I have asked for appropriations to hire one emergency planner, three additional emergency operations officers and four regional emergency management coordinators for our office of emergency management.

During fires and alerts, we put the Office of Emergency Management, OEM, into full 24 hour/around the clock mode to assist our local communities and to coordinate and deploy local, state and federal resources effectively to help deal with the emergency.

These eight additional positions will greatly increase our capability as we prepare for the fire season this summer.”