



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson
Governor

News Release

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Contact: Pahl Shipley
(Santa Fe) 505-476-2202

Governor Bill Richardson Signs Executive Order Creating Bipartisan Task Force on Ethics Reform

*Task force holds first meeting-will craft comprehensive ethics and campaign
finance reform proposals*

LAS CRUCES - Governor Bill Richardson today signed an Executive Order creating the Governor's Task Force on Ethics Reform. The bipartisan group will work immediately to develop a broad package of recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature to reform the state's ethics and campaign-finance laws.

The citizens of New Mexico have entrusted public officials and employees with operating our government in an open and honest manner," said Governor Richardson. "The public must have the utmost confidence in government."

The ethics reform task force will be chaired by Suellyn Scarnecchia, Dean of the University of New Mexico Law School and former Governor Garrey Carruthers, the Dean of the New Mexico State University College of Business Administration and Economics.

"My guidance to the task force is simple- **everything is on the table**. Members should engage in frank, open, and detailed discussions with whomever they deem necessary to see what works and what is needed" added the Governor.

Governor's Task Force on Ethics Reform

Co-Chairs

Governor Garrey Carruthers, Dean of the NMSU School of Business Administration and Economics, and

Suellyn Scarnecchia, Dean of the UNM School of Law

Task Force Members

NM Chief Deputy Attorney General Stuart Bluestone

Barbara Brazil, President, New Mexico First

Matt Brix, Executive Director, Common Cause

Maralyn Budke

John Carey, President and CEO, Association of Commerce and Industry (ACI)

State Senator Dede Feldman

Mary Graña

State Senator Gay Kernan

State Representative W. Ken Martinez

State Representative Kathy McCoy

Jim Noel, Executive Director of the NM Judicial Standards Commission

Leonard Sanchez, CPA, Moss-Adams+Neff LLP

Ron Solimon, President And CEO, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center

Stewart Udall, Chairman, Think New Mexico

Brad Winter, Albuquerque City Council

The Executive Order is attached below.

Background

Governor Richardson introduced an anti-corruption package during the 2006 legislative session in response to the allegations of corruption in New Mexico's Treasurer's Office. The Legislature passed one piece of that package – a law requiring disclosure of campaign contributions when seeking state contracts and banning campaign contributions and any other thing of value from prospective contractors during the contracting process.

The Legislature did not pass other elements of the Governor's anti-corruption package – including more oversight of the Treasurer's investments, restrictions on public officials and their families from obtaining uncompetitive contracts, prohibitions on political activities by state employees on government time, enhanced campaign contribution reporting requirements and expressly requiring reporting of independent expenditures made by "527" groups and individuals who are advocating the election or defeat of a candidate.

Following the legislative session, Governor Richardson signed an executive order increasing oversight of the Treasurer's Office. The order established a code of ethics and conduct for the office, set campaign contribution rules, established a whistleblower program and increased the oversight responsibilities of the State Board of Finance.

The new task force will develop recommendations for the Governor and the Legislature to pursue during the 2007 legislative session. Governor Richardson urged members of Common Cause during today's speech to get actively involved in developing the ethics reform package and lobbying the Legislature to pass tough, new laws.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 2006-021

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON ETHICS REFORM

WHEREAS, the citizens of New Mexico have entrusted public officials and employees with operating our government in an open and honest manner;

WHEREAS, it is essential that the public has the utmost confidence in their government and that it works exclusively to advance the best interests of the people of New Mexico;

WHEREAS, in order to earn the public trust, all public officials and employees must conduct themselves with integrity and honesty as they uphold the high responsibilities of public service;

WHEREAS, recent events at the federal and state level make it abundantly clear that strong ethics and campaign finance laws are essential building blocks in forming an effective democratic and representative government;

WHEREAS, the Richardson administration proposed a significant ethics and campaign finance reform package during the 2006 regular legislative session, which unfortunately was largely not enacted; and

WHEREAS, bipartisan cooperation is needed to develop a comprehensive approach to reforming New Mexico's ethics and campaign finance laws, and to ensure that the Legislature takes meaningful action on reform initiatives during the upcoming 2007 regular legislative session.

NOW THEREFORE, I Bill Richardson, Governor of the State of New Mexico, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of New Mexico, do hereby establish the **Governor's Task Force on Ethics Reform** as follows:

1. The purpose of the Task Force shall be to study the issues of governmental ethics and campaign finance reform in order to develop a broad package of recommendations, including any legislative proposals, for presentation to the Governor prior to the 2007 regular legislative session. The Task Force shall include in its review a comprehensive assessment of current state laws and regulations applicable to these issues.

2. The Task Force shall consist of no more than twenty (20) members. The Governor shall appoint the membership of the Task Force as follows:
 - a. One Co-chair shall be Suellyn Scarnecchia, Dean of the University of New Mexico School of Law;
 - b. One Co-chair shall be former Governor Garrey Carruthers, Dean of the New Mexico State University College of Business Administration and Economics;
 - c. At least two members shall be representatives of non-profit organizations that have demonstrated a consistent dedication to the principles of open and honest government in New Mexico;
 - d. At least four members shall be legislators in the New Mexico State Legislature;
 - e. At least one members shall be representatives of the business community;
 - f. At least one member shall be a representative of local government;
 - g. At least one member shall be a representative of tribal government;
 - h. At least one member shall be a representative of the general public;
 - i. One member shall be from the Judicial Standards Commission; and
 - j. One member shall be from the Attorney General's Office; and
 - k. One member shall be from the Governor's Office.
3. The Office of the Governor and the State Board of Finance shall provide administrative staff and support to the Task Force.
4. The term of each member shall be from the date of appointment until twenty (20) days after adjournment of the next regular session of the Legislature in 2007.
5. The Task Force shall convene at least monthly or more frequently, as necessary.
6. The Task Force shall consult with both public and private individuals, entities, experts, interim committees, and state agencies as deemed necessary for the development of its recommendations. Input from the general public in the development of any proposals is strongly encouraged.
7. The Task Force shall prepare and present its recommendations for the Governor's consideration no later than November 1, 2006.
8. The Task Force shall be an advisory body that makes recommendations to the Governor and in no event shall it make final decisions regarding policy.
9. Task Force members shall serve voluntarily and shall receive no pay for their services, nor shall they be reimbursed for travel or subsistence expenses, unless otherwise provided by law.

THIS ORDER supersedes any other previous orders, proclamations, or directives in conflict. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as it is rescinded by the Governor.

ATTEST:
THIS

DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

3rd DAY OF MAY, 2006

REBECCA VIGIL-GIRON
SEAL
SECRETARY OF STATE

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT
OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO

BILL RICHARDSON
GOVERNOR

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