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Governor Bill Richardson Accepts Offer to Serve on Obama Cabinet

SANTA FE, NM- New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson today announced he has accepted President-elect Barack Obama's offer to serve in his Cabinet as United States Secretary of Commerce, and issued the following statement:

"I am proud to accept President-elect Obama's offer to join the incoming administration and to be part of his efforts to restore and renew the promise of America at home and abroad," said Governor Richardson. "I am honored by President-elect Obama's confidence in me to lead this important agency at this critical period in our nation's history.

"This is by no means an easy decision and brings with it a mix of emotions. I am proud of what we have accomplished in New Mexico during the past six years and we're not done yet. I will be here to deliver the State of the State address when the Legislature convenes on January 20. I will present an aggressive, responsible and balanced budget plan as well as a full slate of important initiatives. I will not resign as Governor until I am confirmed by the United States Senate, and until then I will continue to work tirelessly on behalf of all New Mexicans.

"I have said many times that being Governor of this great state is the best job I have ever had. I have been honored by the trust and support of our citizens, and together we have helped build a New Mexico that is stronger and better prepared to face the challenges and embrace the opportunities of this new century.

"I now ask the people of New Mexico to offer that same trust and support to Lt. Governor Diane Denish, who will take the reins when I leave. She is a strong and insightful leader and has been a great partner as we have grown our economy, worked to build and expand development and production of renewable energy, created jobs and improved our education system. I am confident she will build on the momentum we have started and continue to work in the best interests of our people.

“For the First Lady and me, New Mexico will always be home. There are no words to express our love for the people, the culture, and the beautiful land of this great state. We will carry with us the many friendships we have made as well as the spirit and kindness of the citizens.”