



For Immediate Release
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Governor Bill Richardson Signs Agreements with Chihuahua, Mexico

CHIHUAHUA CITY - Governor Bill Richardson traveled to Mexico today to deal with a number of economic development, tourism, border health, education and security issues. Tourism Secretary Mike Cerletti, Economic Development Secretary Mondragon, Health Secretary Alfredo Vigil and State Police Chief Faron Segotta accompanied the Governor.

Governor Richardson met with the Governor of Chihuahua, Jose Reyes Baeza to sign 4 Memos of Understanding between the State of New Mexico and the State of Chihuahua. A brief description of each MOU follows:

1) Rail Crossing Between New Mexico and Chihuahua, Mexico

Agreement of understanding for approvals and permits for a new rail crossing between New Mexico and the State of Chihuahua, Mexico.

2) Health Agreement between New Mexico Department of Health and the State of Chihuahua.

Governor Bill Richardson, Secretary of Health Dr. Alfredo Vigil, Chihuahua Governor José Reyes Baeza and Social Development Secretary of Chihuahua Oscar Villalobos signed an agreement of understanding to improve and uphold public health conditions in the bi-national border region of the States of Chihuahua, Mexico and New Mexico.

- The memorandum of agreement will improve cooperation among the public health authorities in New Mexico and Ciudad Chihuahua.
- The agreement will improve preventive health services and disease surveillance in the border region of southwestern New Mexico and northern Chihuahua.
- It will address other areas of need including expanding health services in Palomas and Chihuahua.

- As follow up to the agreement, a strategic plan is in development by local health services providers in Luna County, the Department of Health and Chihuahua State Health Services.
- Areas that will be addressed in the strategic plan include: remodeling of the Palomas Health Clinic and staffing with health professionals; improved surveillance and control of infectious diseases (influenza, TB, HIV/AIDS, STDs); preparedness and response to regional health emergencies, including pandemic influenza; obesity and diabetes education, glucose screening and continuity of care; and improved emergency management services.

3) Establish a Binational Education Partnership

Agreement of understanding between the Secretary of Education and Culture of the state of Chihuahua in Mexico and the New Mexico Public Education Department to recognize the importance of establishing collaborative bi-national partnerships.

4) Create a Partnership for Innovation with New Mexico and Chihuahua, Mexico

A joint proclamation creating a Chihuahua – New Mexico Partnership for Innovation. The partnership will focus on aerospace, energy, environment, and water, information technology and advanced materials and nanotechnology.

Governor Richardson also proposed the creation of a new work table on education in the NM Chihuahua Commission. The proposal was welcomed and approved by the Commission. The new work table will foster and promote the exchange of education programs and bilingual teacher exchange.

Governor Richardson will meet with the Governor of Sonora, Eduardo Bours Castelo tomorrow. He will also be speaking at the 66th Annual US-Mexico Border Health Association Conference in Hermosillo, Sonora.