



PRESS RELEASE

February 28, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NM's Congressional Delegation Scores High On Children's Issues

ALBUQUERQUE—New Mexico scored in the top half of all states in the annual Nonpartisan Congressional Scorecard put out by the Children's Defense Fund (CDF). The scorecard ranks the states based on how their congressional delegations voted on ten key bills during 2007. Those bills included reauthorizing the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), expanded funding for Head Start, making college more affordable, and raising the minimum wage.

Two of NM's members of Congress received a score 100 percent based on CDF's criteria – Senator Jeff Bingaman and Representative Tom Udall. Representative Heather Wilson scored 70 percent and Senator Pete Domenici scored 60 percent, while Representative Steve Pearce received one of the lowest scores in the report, 20 percent.

Their combined scores gave New Mexico a ranking of 22nd in the nation.

"It's good to see New Mexico ranking in the top half of the nation for making children's health and well-being a priority," said Eric Griego, Executive Director of New Mexico Voices for Children. "Unfortunately, not all of these bills passed, and one that passed twice – the reauthorization and expansion of SCHIP – was twice vetoed by the president."

Four of NM's five congressional delegates voted to support the SCHIP legislation, which would have expanded health coverage to 3.2 million more uninsured children.

"This scorecard shows us that children need to be a bigger priority for all of Congress – not just with New Mexico's members," Griego added. "We will never see any real progress until we take a comprehensive approach to ensuring the health and well-being of our children."

That means providing all children with health coverage and access to quality early care and education."

The report, put out by the CDF Action Council, is available here:

http://www.childrensdefense.org/site/PageServer?pagename=act_home

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New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico's children, families and communities.
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