



PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Bill Jordan, Policy Director, New Mexico Voices for Children
505-350-3097 (c)

OR: Sharon Kayne, Communications Director, New Mexico Voices for Children
505-244-9505 ext. 30 (p), 505-401-8709 (c), 505-244-9509 (f), skayne@nmvoices.org

Child advocates applaud Governor's Medicaid funding request Senate urged to add funding to HB2 to insure more kids

ALBUQUERQUE—New Mexico Voices for Children applauds Governor Richardson's budget request to provide health insurance to more low-income children and urges the Senate to at least meet the level of funding the Governor has requested. If not, tens of thousands of New Mexico's children will go without the health care they need to thrive.

"In this year where we are trying to find agreement on the contentious issue of universal health care, we should at least be able to agree to cover already eligible low-income children, so that they have a chance to grow up healthy and able to succeed in life," said Bill Jordan, Policy Director for NM Voices for Children. "If we can't agree to insure our most vulnerable, how can we ever agree to cover everyone?"

Because state Medicaid spending is matched by federal dollars, New Mexico receives almost \$3 of federal money for every \$1 it spends. "For every child we decide to insure, the federal government insures three more," said Jordan. "Leaving that kind of money on the table is shortsighted."

The state budget bill (HB2) has moved out of the House and is now with the Senate. It under-funds Medicaid by about \$11 million, does not fulfill the Governor's request for \$9 million to insure 9,000 more kids, and shorted the Governor's supplemental request by \$14 million.

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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.

2340 Alamo SE, Suite 120, Albuquerque, NM 87106; 505-244-9505 (p); www.nmvoices.org