



Press Release

February 3, 2005

Contact: Gerry Bradley, Research Director, New Mexico Voices for Children
cell: 264-0074 office: 244-9505 x23

New Poll Shows Governor Richardson Out of Step with New Mexicans on Tax Policy –

Bi-Partisan Majority Supports Freeze on Personal Income Tax Cut, Greater Investment in Healthcare, Education

Albuquerque – Poll results released today show that a strong bi-partisan majority of New Mexicans would support a freeze on further implementation of the cut in personal income taxes passed in 2003 at the Governor's urging.

Majority Support Tax Cut Freeze ...

60% of the 600 people polled (who are registered and likely to vote) agree that the state's income tax cut should be stopped – and even rolled back - if there is not enough money to adequately fund education and healthcare. Of those in agreement, 53% are Republicans and 70% are Democrats.

The tax cuts are being phased in over a five-year period. In 2007, when fully phased in, they will cost the state budget \$360 million each year.

... Including Those That Benefit From the Tax Cut

Mark Donatelli, a New Mexican resident who is in the upper-income bracket that received a large tax cut, said: "I never felt that I needed a tax cut in the first place. And, frankly, I haven't noticed receiving it. But, I have been a criminal defense lawyer in New Mexico for more than 25 years. I know that investing in education will result in less crime. Rather than a tax cut, I'd like to see more dollars spent on education."

(more)

“I agree”, says Bill Kass who is similarly situated economically. “I never wanted these tax cuts. I wasn’t polled, but if I had been, I would have been in the group that supported rolling the tax cuts back to where they were. The freeze on further implementation that has been proposed by Senator Lopez (SB469) is a step in the right direction, but I would be in favor of returning to where we were before the cuts.”

Majority Also Support Increased Spending on Healthcare, Education, Economic Development

A majority (56%) of those polled also said they would rather see the state make a greater investment in education, healthcare and economic development than another tax cut.

And Strong Majority Support Tax Increase for Top Earners

The poll results also show a strong majority (71%) supporting a tax increase for top earners if that would mean that low-cost health insurance could be provided to all children in New Mexico.

Gerry Bradley, New Mexico Voices for Children Research Director, adds: “The sad news is that the tax cuts have not stimulated the economy either. New Mexico is no better off having passed this huge tax cut. In fact, if we don’t have enough money for education and healthcare we will be a less appealing location for business”.

The poll was commissioned by New Mexico Voices for Children and designed and administered by Lake Nell Perry & Associates. It surveyed 600 New Mexicans who are registered and likely to vote. It was administered in September 2004 and has a margin of error of +/- 4.0%.

###