

# POLICIES FOR A STRONGER NEW MEXICO



## 2021 Legislative Session Priorities



In January, 112 newly elected legislators will convene for a 60-day legislative session to address the dreadful impacts of the pandemic and build a budget that provides opportunity for all New Mexicans. This is not a time to pass a stingy budget – we need to continue building a stronger public school system, ensure health care for all, and keep dollars flowing to families to spend in communities large and small all across the state. Some of these investments will pay off quickly, others will set the stage for a strong, stable economy far into the future. These are the strategies we need to rebuild our economy.

## OUR PRIORITIES FOR THE 2021 LEGISLATIVE SESSION INCLUDE:

### ENSURE ALL NEW MEXICANS CAN MEET THE BASIC NEEDS OF THEIR FAMILIES

- Fully fund Medicaid so all eligible New Mexicans can be served without cuts to benefits, eligibility levels, or provider payment rates.
- Create a basic health plan or Medicaid buy-in plan that is available to all residents, regardless of immigration status.
- Expand food security resources (including the state's Double-Up Food Bucks program and the state SNAP supplement) and reduce enrollment barriers to crucial safety net programs like TANF and unemployment insurance.
- Ensure all workers have access to paid sick leave.
- Eliminate a number of fines and fees from the Children's Code, specifically, court fees that are incurred when a youth goes to trial, and fines associated with possession of a banned substance.
- Oppose a food tax.

### BUILD A STRONG BUDGET THAT SUPPORTS FAMILIES, CHILDREN, WORKERS, AND BUSINESSES

- Keep workers throughout the state employed by investing in building skills and providing opportunity for kids and families through adequately funding K-12 and higher education, early childhood education and care programs, and health system improvements
- Increase income eligibility for child care assistance; eliminate copays for those parents earning the lowest incomes; reduce copays for those earning moderate incomes; and provide funding to raise wages for child care workers and increase opportunities for their professional development.
- Pass a constitutional amendment to support early childhood program funding with a small percentage of the state's Land Grant Permanent Fund.



## KEEP AND PUT MONEY IN THE HANDS OF NEW MEXICANS WHO WILL SPEND IT QUICKLY AND LOCALLY

- Increase the amount and expand who can receive the Working Families Tax Credit and update the long-neglected Low-Income Comprehensive Tax Rebate for New Mexico families in need.
- Increase funding and expand eligibility for the General Assistance Program so families left out of federal economic relief who meet income qualifications can benefit, regardless of immigration status.
- Enact a cap of 36% APR (including fees) on all lending products so families are not caught in cycles of increasing debt.

## PROTECT EXISTING REVENUES AND, IF NECESSARY, RAISE REVENUE

- Ensure stable, adequate funding for education, health care, and other programs and services that support family economic well-being.
- Lessen the state's over-reliance on dwindling fossil fuel revenues by raising revenue and diversifying revenue streams from more stable sources.
- Oppose more wasteful tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy and repeal past tax breaks that failed to create jobs.

## PROMOTE EQUITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND ACCESS IN THE POLICYMAKING PROCESS

- Require a racial and ethnic impact statement on all legislation.
- Announce committee hearings and floor sessions at least 24 hours in advance and release any budget proposals, legislation, or amendments scheduled to be heard therein; continue webcasting all hearings and floor sessions; and ensure that there is a process for obtaining public input on proposed legislation, amendments, and budget changes.
- Ensure language access for non-English speakers in the policymaking process, including interpretation of public hearings and public comment sessions, and translation of legislation posted online.

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