



# **2021 Post-Session Legislative Debrief**

**New Mexico Voices for Children**

April 1, 2021



A photograph of four diverse children (two boys and two girls) sitting outdoors on the ground, smiling and playing with bubbles. The background is a soft-focus view of trees and foliage. The text "Heading into 2021" is overlaid in the center in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

# Heading into 2021




# Pandemic Impacts on Well-Being



- Decrease in pediatric visits and vaccinations
- 52% of parents had lost employment income
- 40% of parents felt anxious or stressed
- 30% feared eviction or foreclosure
- 34% of children were projected to be food insecure



An aerial photograph of a deep, rugged canyon. A river flows through the bottom of the canyon, winding its way towards the horizon. The canyon walls are steep and rocky, with some sparse vegetation. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a sky with warm, orange and yellow hues, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is dramatic and expansive.

**The health and economic  
impacts of COVID-19 have  
been highly inequitable  
across lines of income, race,  
and gender.**

# Session Goals

- Prioritize equity in policies and partnerships
- Ensure all families can meet their basic needs
- Build a strong budget that helps children thrive
- Support economic recovery by supporting workers and families
- Protect, diversify, and raise revenues



A photograph of four children running through a park with autumn foliage. The child on the left is a girl in a bright pink puffer jacket and light pink pants, running towards the camera with a joyful expression. Next to her is a girl in a dark blue puffer jacket, a grey knit scarf, and leopard-print leggings, also running towards the camera. In the background, two more children are running: a boy in a teal jacket and a girl in a blue and white striped jacket and blue pants. The background is filled with trees with yellow and orange leaves, creating a warm, autumnal atmosphere.

# Strategies for the 2021 Legislative Session

# Political Context

- Logistics made it difficult to manage relationships, monitor tone, and measure progress
- New lawmakers ready to deliver
- Senate much more progressive, but Senate Finance Committee still moderate
- Significant federal appropriations to state
- Governor cautious on raising revenue



# Strategies and Tactics

- Outreach to candidates
- Strong pre-session contact with new lawmakers
- Heavy social media presence
- Weekly email updates to lawmakers and MLG
- Partner collaboration
- 4 T's: Testify - Text - Talk - Thank

# Strategies and Tactics

- Polling and data modeling
- Paid social media posts
- Highly targeted online ads
- Mailers to legislative districts
- Online and TV issue ads





# Policy Outcomes

# Tax Credits to Support Families and Improve Equity



- **House tax package** (HB 291)
  - Increased Working Families Tax Credit by 47%
  - Expanded to new populations of workers
  - Indexed and tripled low-income tax rebate
  - \$100 million+ more every year for families
  - Benefiting more than 400,000 households
- **\$109 million in tax relief for essential workers** (SB 1)



# Raising and Diversifying Revenue

- **DID NOT PASS**

- Ensure top earners pay their fair share (HB 291, SB 56, and SB 89)
- Repeal tax break for high earners (HB 291)
- Ensure big corporations pay their fair share (HB 291 and SB 211)
- House tax package (HB 291) passed both tax committees and full House then **REVENUE AMENDED OUT**

- **Successfully OPPOSED costly, regressive tax cuts for higher earners and big corps**

# Family Economic Security

- **Paid sick leave**
  - Healthy Workplaces Act (HB 20)
- **DID NOT PASS**
  - Paid Family Medical Leave (HB 38)
- **DID NOT PASS**
  - 36% Interest Rates on Small Loans (SB 66)





# Early Care and Education

- **Permanent Fund for Early Education (HJR 1)**
  - 1.25% total increase
  - 60% for ECE
  - 40% for K12
- **Constitutional amendment will go to the voters in November 2022**

# Early Care and Education

- **Funding** (HB 2)

- \$3 million - pay equity
- \$7 million - BIPOC teacher recruitment and training
- \$3 million - home visiting
- \$1 million - Families First
- \$1.4 million - FIT (Family Infant Toddler Program)
- \$7.7 million - early pre-K
- \$2.8 million - turn half-day pre-K to full day



# K-12 and Higher Education

- **Multicultural and linguistically responsive education**
  - No School Discrimination for Hair (HB 29 and SB 80)
  - Bilingual Multicultural Education Advisory Council (HB 52)
  - Black Education Act (HB 43)
  - Access to Culturally Appropriate Services (HB 287)
- **Financial aid**
  - Continued funding for the Opportunity Scholarship (HB 2)
- **DID NOT PASS**
  - HB 131, HB 219, and SB 210

# Health Care

- **Making health coverage more affordable**
  - No Behavioral Health Co-pays (SB 317)
  - Health Care Affordability Fund (SB 317)
  - Patient Debt Collection Protection (SB 71)
- **Planning for universal coverage**
  - \$575,000 - Health Security Planning Act (HB 203)
- **\$64 million - increase in Medicaid funding** (HB 2)
- **DID NOT PASS**
  - Health Easy Enrollment Program (HB 272)

# Public Health

- **Support for food security** (HB 2 and SB 377)
  - \$2.34 million - K-12 School Nutrition Programs including NM Grown Program
  - \$380,000 - Breakfast after the Bell and Reducing Co-pays for Meals
  - \$275,000 - Food, Hunger, and Farm Act (HB 207)
  - \$100,000 - College Hunger Pilot Program (SB 377)
- **Black and Native American maternal health**
  - Changes to the Maternal Mortality Review Committee (SB 96)
- **DID NOT PASS**
  - Increase Tobacco Tax (HB 167 and SB 197)
  - Flavored Tobacco Ban (HB 205)



# Environment

- **Reducing emissions**

- Community Solar Act (SB 84)
- Sustainable Buildings Tax Credit (HB 15)

- **Diversifying our economy with a just transition**

- Sustainable Economy Task Force (SB 112)

- **Improving environmental and community health**

- Local Government Air Quality Regulations (SB 8)

- **DID NOT PASS**

- Climate Solutions Act (HB 9)
- Utility Affordability and Relief Act (HB 206)



# Criminal Justice Reform

- **Fines and Fees**

- No Fines and Fees for Some Juvenile Crimes (HB 183)

- **DID NOT PASS**

- Driver's Licence Suspension Penalties (SB 7)
- Payment Flexibility for Court Convictions (SB 181)



# Equity and Immigrant Rights

- \$5 million - economic relief for immigrant families left out of federal relief (HB 2)
- Health Benefits for Certain Non-citizens (HB 112)
- State Agency Disclosure of Sensitive Info Act (SB 75)
- No Citizen Proof for Occupational License (SB 219)
- **DID NOT PASS**
  - Limited English Access to State Programs (SB 368)
  - Equity Impact Statements (various)

A photograph of four young children running joyfully on a dirt path in a sunlit forest. The children are of diverse backgrounds and are all smiling. The text "Looking Forward" is overlaid in white on the center of the image.

# Looking Forward



# Looking Forward: Policy Priorities

- Policy progress still needed in many areas
  - ECE, predatory lending, language and program access, raising and diversifying revenue
- Grow relationships with and help develop new lawmakers
- Prioritize racial and gender equity
- Bigger, bolder, better policy for families

# Looking Forward: Organizational Priorities

- Prioritize racial and gender equity in partnerships and organizational engagements
- Grow environmental policy work
- State Tribal Policy fellowship
- Continue to grow, ensure we are structured for success
- Leadership transition



A large group of children, many wearing yellow shirts and colorful masks, are sitting in a circle on a light-colored tiled floor. In the center of the circle is a large, light-colored mural of an eagle with its wings spread. The children are looking towards the camera, some with their hands raised. The scene appears to be indoors, possibly in a school or community center.

# Support Our Work

Make a donation and  
sign up to receive email alerts at  
[www.nmvoices.org](http://www.nmvoices.org)



# Thank You!

**New Mexico Voices for Children**

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