



## 2009 Legislative Agenda

updated 2/10/09

**New Mexico First** is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that engages the people of our state in public policy. We do this work through multi-day deliberative town halls during which citizens from all walks of life find consensus on key issues affecting New Mexico. The following legislative agenda draws primarily on citizen recommendations developed during the organization's 2008 statewide town hall: *Business as Unusual: Rural and Urban Economic Development*. The event brought together over 200 community members, business people, and policymakers from all regions of New Mexico. After the town hall, an implementation team was established to advance the citizens' recommendations, and that team has developed the following priorities for the 2009 Legislative Session. (*The full report, containing all 18 final town hall recommendations, is available at [www.nmfirst.org](http://www.nmfirst.org)*). The implementation team is chaired by Silver City resident Linda Kay Jones, along with subcommittee chairs Beverlee McClure of Albuquerque, Judy Stubbs of Roswell, and Jamai Blevin of Santa Fe.

In addition, **New Mexico First** is supporting priorities from two other deliberations: the 2007 statewide town hall on healthcare reform and a 2008 town hall on sustainable transportation, which the organization conducted through a contract with the NM Department of Transportation and NM Association of Regional Councils.

Priority	Bill or Policy Description	Status
<b>Simplify state and local regulations.</b>  <i>(Advancing rec. 18 from the economic dev. town hall)</i>	So that economic development efforts can be enhanced, New Mexico should have a state and local regulatory frame work that is fair, simplified, uniform, accessible, timely, consistent, affordable, and transparent. The implementation team supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HB 45</b>, which would require regulatory impact statements for each rule, regulation, or standard promulgated by a state agency.</li> <li>• The creation of an interim committee or task force to review and make recommendations on the implementation of the Administrative Procedures Act since New Mexico is the only state that has not adopted such an act.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HB 45 introduced by Representative Richard Berry and endorsed by New Mexico First and ACI.</li> <li>• Legislation has not yet been introduced regarding the Administrative Procedures Act.</li> </ul>
<b>Enable lawmakers to make informed decisions about tax policies.</b>  <i>(Advancing rec. 19 from the economic dev. town hall)</i>	In order for decision-makers to review the tax structure of New Mexico, data is needed to make informed decisions. The implementation team proposes creating an independent Office of Fiscal Accountability that will conduct tax and economic policy research as well as other duties such as Fiscal Impact Report reviews.	A bill has not yet been introduced but the concept is endorsed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Mexico First</li> <li>• ACI</li> <li>• NM Municipal League</li> <li>• NM Association of Counties</li> <li>• NM Tax Research Institute</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Work regionally to meet workforce skills and training needs.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec. 17 from the economic dev. town hall)</i></p>	<p>The town hall agreed that New Mexico needs a trained and educated workforce that meets the needs of existing and new businesses. The implementation team supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HB 7</b>, providing funding for the Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP).</li> <li>• The <b>Layoff Assistance Bill</b> that would support retraining for 600 unemployed mine workers as well as fund collection of data in the western New Mexico region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HB 7 was introduced by House Speaker Ben Lujan and is endorsed by New Mexico First, WNMU, and NM-IDEA.</li> <li>• The Layoff Assistance Bill is expected to be introduced by Senator Howie C. Morales.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strengthen NM's educational system, pre-school through college.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec. 16 from the economic dev. town hall)</i></p>	<p>A robust and seamless educational system is essential to creating an appropriately trained workforce and a pipeline of youth entrepreneurs. The implementation team supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IDEAL-NM</b>, a joint statewide education initiative between the public and higher education departments to provide educational opportunities that increase digital literacy skills for rural and urban youth.</li> <li>• The <b>New Mexico Rural Revitalization Initiative (NMRRI)</b>, established to help rural school districts and communities work together to stimulate the economy, revitalize the community, and provide educational improvement opportunities for all students.</li> <li>• <b>SB 29</b>, which would fund entrepreneurial training and technical support statewide.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding for IDEAL-NM is part of the state Economic Development Department's proposed agency budget. New Mexico First endorsed the initial establishment of the initiative and supports ongoing funding for it.</li> <li>• The NMRRI is an existing initiative and a bill is expected that will provide this year's funding.</li> <li>• SB 29 was introduced by Senator Mary Jane Garcia.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Use marketing strategies to promote local communities and sustain businesses.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec. 7 from the economic dev. town hall)</i></p>	<p>So that rural communities can sustain existing businesses and attract new ones, the communities should form partnerships to plan and implement marketing strategies. The implementation team supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HB 38</b>, which would provide for marketing state agricultural products based on regional, varietal, or specialty labels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HB 38 was introduced by Representative Paul Bandy.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Sustain and retain small business.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing the spirit of recs 8 and 10, as well as several group vision statements, from the economic dev. town hall)</i></p>	<p>Because small business is such an integral part of the economic growth strategies of NM's rural and urban communities, the implementation team supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SB 14</b>, business incubator programs.</li> <li>• <b>SB 97</b>, a statewide small business development center at Santa Fe Community College.</li> <li>• <b>SB 45</b>, extending the existing research and development (R&amp;D) tax credit to 2013. The tax credit is set to expire in 2009.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SB 14 was introduced by Senator Carroll Leavell.</li> <li>• SB 97 was introduced by Senator Carlos Cisneros.</li> <li>• SB 45 was introduced by Senator Bernadette Sanchez.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Use data to understand local needs and set economic goals.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing recs 5 and 6 from the economic dev. town hall)</i></p>	<p>The town hall called for the systematic collection of economic data, as well as the use of data in local development planning. Proposals that appear to be aligned with those goals include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fund the operations of UNM's Bureau of Business and Economic Research to secure a thorough statistical picture of New Mexico's workforce to include a gap analysis of specific employer's needs versus an accurate assessment of skill sets available in New Mexico's workforce.</li> <li>• The <b>Layoff Assistance Bill</b> (referenced above) is expected to support regional data collection including community demographics and economic profiles.</li> </ul>	<p>Bills have not yet been introduced.</p>
<p><b>Recruit and retain healthcare professionals.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec 1 from the 2007 healthcare town hall)</i></p>	<p>People in the town hall spoke at length about the chronic shortage of physicians and other healthcare professionals, particularly in rural areas. For this reason, New Mexico First supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SB374</b>, which expands the Rural Health Care Tax Credit to include pharmacists and pharmacist clinicians.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Support workplace wellness programs.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec 13 from the 2007 healthcare town hall)</i></p>	<p>The healthcare town hall called for incentives to encourage employer-based wellness efforts, prompting its implementation team to draft and support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HJM 24</b>, which calls for a collaborative study by the Department of Health and Economic Development to determine the cost and impact of chronic disease on the New Mexico work force and the potential impact of business based wellness programs.</li> </ul>	

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<p><b>Continue to study sustainable transportation funding options.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec 11 from the transportation town hall)</i></p>	<p>So that the state can maintain and preserve its current transportation infrastructure, the town hall recommends that the state continue the work outlined in House Memorial 35. Proposals that are consistent with this report include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HM 5</b>, which requests a continuation of the 2008 review of the state's current/future transportation needs to identify appropriate funding strategies for a sustainable transportation system.</li> <li>• <b>SB 213</b>, amending the Weight Distance Tax Act to impose civil penalties for under-reporting mileage driven or gross vehicle weight.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HM 5 was introduced by Representative Roberto "Bobby" Gonzales, Chair of House Transportation and Public Works Committee.</li> <li>• SB213 was introduced by Senator Sue Wilson Belfort and as a "do pass" from the Senate Finance Committee.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Spend transportation-related revenues on transportation needs.</b></p> <p><i>(Advancing rec 5 from the transportation town hall)</i></p>	<p>Town hall participants called for redirecting currently diverted transportation-related funds back to the state road fund. The implementation team supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HB 374</b>, which distributes a portion of the Motor Vehicle Excise Tax to the State Road Fund.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HB 374 was introduced by Representative Roberto "Bobby" Gonzales, Chair of House Transportation and Public Works Committee.</li> </ul>

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