
20 Ways in 20 Days

Way 2 Day

20 ways New Mexicans will be hurt by more budget cuts

Potential Cut: Funding for “Drug Courts,” which tackle New Mexico’s DWI and drug problems at the source.

Potential Consequences: A half-million dollar funding cut for the state’s treatment-oriented courts (5 percent of their \$10 million budget) could mean that many DWI offenders will not be treated—making them more likely to drive drunk again. These courts, which send DWI and other substance-abuse offenders to treatment to address the root cause of their addictions, are very successful and cost effective.¹ Only 9 percent of drug court graduates re-offend, compared to an overall recidivism rate of 45 percent.² Drug courts *cost five times less* than incarceration.

A Better Choice: A dime-a-drink tax increase on alcoholic beverages would bring in \$70 million³—or enough to prevent cuts to treatment courts *and* all other courts, the Department of Public Safety, and the Corrections Department.

Legislators have a clear choice: they can either cut funding for this live-saving, cost-effective program or they can make the price of a drink a tiny bit higher and our state safer.

We urge them to make the *Better Choice for New Mexico*.

Better Choices New Mexico supports a balanced approach to addressing New Mexico’s budgetary challenges. This alliance of small businesses, faith-based groups, working families, and nonprofit organizations believes cutting critical services and programs would be a terrible mistake. **First things First, New Mexico. Tell our Legislature: *Don’t balance the budget on the backs of New Mexico’s working families.*** Instead, open the books on tax expenditures, close the loopholes for out-of-state corporations, and rollback the tax breaks for the wealthy.

1 <http://joo.nmcourts.gov/joomla/pscourts/index.php/court-programs/performance-measures>

2 Sentencing Commission Study

3 Tax calculator at http://www.marininstitute.org/site/index.php?option=com_alcoholtax&view=result&controller=result&Itemid



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