

PRESS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Nancy Jo Archer, Executive Director, Hogares, Inc.,
(505) 345-8471 (office); (505) 379-6770 (cell)
OR: Sharon Kayne, Communications Director, NM Voices for Children
(505) 244-9505, ext. 30 (office); (505) 401-8709 (cell)



Better Choices New Mexico Urges Governor to Use Veto Power
Alliance requests line-item veto of 7.6% agency cuts; protection of education and Medicaid

ALBUQUERQUE – Better Choices New Mexico (BCNM) sent a letter to the Governor last week asking him to take swift yet strategic action as he addresses legislation passed during the recent special legislative session. An excerpt of the letter follows:

"We urge you to line-item veto Section 2.A.(4) of HAFM substitute for HB17 & 33 as amended, eliminating the Legislature's requirement for aggregate agency cuts of 7.6 percent. We would also like to strongly emphasize that the subsequent subsections of paragraph (4) outlining agency and program exemptions must be observed should you consider additional executive action for budget reduction, in lieu of this section of the bill. Certainly we urge you to honor the Legislature's clear intention to hold all Medicaid funding harmless from budget cuts."

A copy of the letter is attached as a pdf.

Before the special session convened, BCNM warned about the human consequences of a cuts-only approach to the budget deficit, even laying out 20 specific ways the cuts would hurt New Mexicans in a "20 Ways/20 Days" campaign.

BCNM is a group of small business organizations, faith leaders, working families, education employees, lawmakers, and various advocacy groups, formed to offer alternatives to continued state budget cuts. The alliance believes that legislators and the Governor must take a balanced approach to addressing New Mexico's fiscal crisis, an approach that reflects consideration of all revenue generating mechanisms. Additional information on Better Choices New Mexico and related resources is available at www.betterchoicesnewmexico.com.

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Better Choices New Mexico members that signed on to the letter: Lutheran Advocacy Ministry • NM Conference of Churches • American Federation of Teachers–New Mexico • National Education Association–New Mexico • AFSCME • Communications Workers of America–Local 7076 • Center for Civic Policy • SouthWest Organizing Project • Conservation Voters New Mexico • Community Action New Mexico • America Votes Education & Action Fund • New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness • New Mexico Solutions • New Mexico Youth Providers Alliance • New Mexico Early Childhood Alliance • Families and Youth, Inc. • Family Justice Alliance • New Mexico School Nurses Association • New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence • Planned Parenthood of New Mexico • Hands Across Cultures • Hogares, Inc. • New Mexico Child Care and Education Association • New Mexico Voices for Children

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. Instead, the Legislature needs to open the books on tax expenditures, close the loopholes for out-of-state corporations, and rollback the tax breaks for the wealthy.