



New Mexico Business Coalition (NMBC) 2017 Legislative Priorities

Dear New Mexico Senators and Representatives,

The New Mexico Business Coalition (NMBC) is a nonpartisan association that supports pro-market, limited government measures to build and strengthen our economy. This includes, among other things, balanced and fair laws and regulations that will attract and retain good companies to our state, strengthen opportunities for existing businesses, and provide for a quality workforce.

Beginning with the 2014 Legislative Session, NMBC selected certain business-related bills and scored each legislator based on how they voted. NMBC will be active in the 2017 session, tracking and scoring relevant legislator votes and making that information available to voters.

NMBC strongly encourages legislators to work effectively in a nonpartisan manner, putting the good of the state ahead of political agendas. We would like to see careful review of all legislation at every phase of its passage in regard to potential impact on economic development. Below are NMBC priorities for the 2017 NM Legislative Session that NMBC believes will benefit New Mexico:

1) State Budget: *Leadership and fiscal responsibility, not Band-Aids and depleting reserve funds!* Blaming New Mexico budget deficits on declining oil and gas tax revenue ignores the root of the problem. Expansion of government spending year after year, based on unrealistic income projections, is what got us into trouble. We need fiscally responsible budgets that focus on basic services and stop the unsustainable expansion of programs that promote dependence rather than free-market prosperity.

2) Energy: *NMBC is the voice for energy in New Mexico!* Why? Because NMBC works on common sense solutions that provide clean, affordable, reliable energy that is important for all of us. Our grass-roots advocacy also provides strong support for the extractive industries that provide the basis for energy production.

3) Manufacturing: *NMBC is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturing.* This solid partnership provides manufacturing interests with strong leadership at the federal and state levels. Manufacturing, by NMBC definition, covers just about every business industry with the exception of services.

4) New Mexico Tax Code: *Smart tax management means more state revenue!* The tax code should be rewritten to eliminate useless tax incentives and provide a fair, sound revenue base. A clean, fair tax code will promote business growth, employment and stabilize state revenue while making New Mexico more competitive with surrounding states.

5) Wages: *Forced wages = fewer jobs!* Increased government mandated wages will result in forced inflation, reduced hours for workers and fewer jobs for New Mexicans. There are more productive ways to help low income families improve their economic outlook such as providing effective skills training to help them achieve better jobs and/or pay increases.

6) Permanent Fund: *Permanent Fund depletion will hurt the future of New Mexico children!* The Land Grant Permanent Fund (LGPf) is New Mexico's education endowment

fund. Student enrollment has remained steady while funding has increased by more than \$900 million. Yet, the educational system continues to fail in nationwide comparisons. Accountability is the answer to failure . not increased funding. Further distributions from the LGPF amounts to an attack on New Mexico's children who deserve to have this fund in perpetuity.

7) Environmental law: *Bio-balance where peoples' lives matter!* It is critical to have responsible laws that do not excessively limit any industry from producing valuable resources and jobs while assuring the protection of our land, water, and air. Productive use of our lands while protecting the environment is achievable, but following aggressive environmental agendas at any cost is neither wise nor productive. This will support the expansion of the extractive industries as well as agriculture, ranching and other industries.

8) Workforce development: *A good education is the first step in developing a quality workforce!* New Mexico's educational system is failing from the bottom up and must be reconfigured with modeling from successful states. NMBC is also coordinating with others to provide top quality workforce training for high paying manufacturing jobs. The goal is to provide our children with a good education and provide new employment opportunities.

9) Employment laws: *Consistency is key!* NMBC wants uniform, consistent laws throughout the state to address wages and benefits rather than a patchwork of laws developed at local levels.

10) Economic incentives use needs to be analyzed: *Invest in job creation that benefits New Mexico!* Incentives may help entice new companies to our state, but they should *never be used if they will harm or create unfair competition against existing New Mexico businesses*. Any incentives offered must include strengthened rules of use and detailed, strict and enforceable claw back parameters.

11) State Control: *Power to our people!* New Mexico should support a Convention of States to reduce and define the amount of control the federal government has. In addition, New Mexico's elected officials should take steps to protect our lands, business opportunities and cultural traditions from increasing federal regulation, laws and executive orders. The federal government owns nearly half of all land in New Mexico and has taken control of over 830,000 additional acres in recent years. This creates a hardship on industries that can't operate and the state that doesn't earn tax revenue from those operations.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss our positions on legislation, please contact our office by email at nmbiz@nmbizcoalition.org or by phone at (505) 836-4223.

Thank you for your service to the state. We look forward to working with you in the 2017 legislative session.

Sincerely,



Carla J. Sonntag

President

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