



NEW MEXICO HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
P.O. Box 2348  
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87504-2348

**Bill Richardson**  
*Governor*

**Pamela S. Hyde, J.D.**  
*Secretary*

Contact Betina Gonzales McCracken 505-827-6245 or 505-699-4675

**For Immediate Release**

## **House of Representatives Approves Health Care Coverage for Domestic Partners Legislation**

### **Legislation to Insure More New Mexicans Now Moves to Senate for Approval**

*Santa Fe, February 5, 2007* – Today the New Mexico House of Representatives approved **House Bill (HB) 15 – Requiring Insurers to Offer Health Care Coverage for Certain Domestic Partners**, by a 41 to 25 vote.

This legislation, sponsored by Representative Peter Wirth, is an *Insure New Mexico!* Council recommendation to help more New Mexicans get health care coverage by requiring private commercial insurance carriers to offer health insurance coverage for small employer who *choose* to cover the domestic partners of their employees.

“Many of New Mexico’s largest employers, including the State of New Mexico and the University of New Mexico, among others, offer domestic partner coverage. However, small employers have found it difficult to find a commercial insurance carrier to provide the coverage for their employees,” said Secretary Pamela Hyde, Human Services Department and co-chair of the *Insure New Mexico!* Council. “This legislation simply ensures that all private commercial insurance carriers have plan for those small employers who want to cover the domestic partners of their employees.”

A domestic partner is described, for this piece of legislation, as two adults over 18 years of age who are committed, have shared a primary residence for at least one year and share financial obligations.

According to the Census Current Population Survey, 2003-2005, 21.1% (401,000) New Mexicans are uninsured, with the highest population between the ages of 18 and 34.

Duplicate **Senate Bill (SB) 182**, sponsored by Senator Cisco McSorley, passed the Senate Public Affairs Committee last week. It now heads to the Senate Judiciary Committee.

###