



For Immediate Release  
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## **Governor Bill Richardson Signs Two Important Health Care Reform Bills**

*Legislation Results in More Dollars for Direct Services and Elimination of Gender as a Rating Factor for Coverage*

SANTA FE—Governor Bill Richardson today signed two very important pieces of health care reform legislation that have been part of his comprehensive health reform package over the past few years. The legislation will result in more services for dollars spent on health care and end to gender discrimination for coverage.

“I am pleased that after all of the years of hard work from my administration, advocates, and all of the others who have played a part in health insurance reform in New Mexico, to be able to sign these two very important pieces of legislation that will both improve our state’s health care system,” said Governor Richardson.

### **HB 12 – Health Insurer Service Reimbursement**

House Bill 12 will help track health care dollars and make sure that insurance companies spend more on direct services. It requires single group providers, those that cover the majority of New Mexicans, to spend at least 85% on direct services rather than on administration or profit over a three year period.

“This legislation ensures New Mexicans will be getting the services they pay for and deserve. And small employers and individuals who are purchasing insurance will get the protections they need,” said Governor Richardson.

Representative John Heaton sponsored House Bill 12

### **SB 148 – No use of Gender for Health Insurance Rating**

Senate Bill 148 will eventually eliminate gender as a health insurance rating factor by creating a five percent annual phase out of the practice. New Mexico will join eleven other states that already prohibit or restrict gender discrimination in the individual market.

“Currently insurers in New Mexico can charge women up to 20 percent more than men for individual and small group health insurance plans. This is unacceptable and I pleased to sign this legislation and soon see the end of this discrimination,” said Governor Richardson.

Senator Nancy Rodriguez sponsored Senate Bill 148.

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