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PRESS RELEASE

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Statewide Immigrants' Rights Organization Alleges Governor's Driver's License Radio Ads Violate State Campaign Laws

Upon learning that the Governor's Campaign Committee utilized left-over campaign funds to pay for radio ads attacking the law that allows immigrants to obtain drivers' licenses, Somos Un Pueblo Unido, a statewide immigrants' rights organization, requested that New Mexico's Secretary of State and Attorney General, as well as the District Attorney from the First Judicial District, investigate this apparent violation of the Campaign Reporting Act and file a civil or criminal complaint as authorized by statute. Letters to these agencies are attached.

Somos Un Pueblo Unido also released the following statement:

"We are shocked to learn that the Governor, in an effort to push her anti immigrant political agenda, would direct her campaign committee to misuse left-over funds to intimidate legislators and interfere with the legislative process.

Thousands of New Mexicans have signed petitions, called their legislators, and travelled to Santa Fe to attend hearings and speak with their representatives about the merits of giving drivers' licenses to immigrants. The Governor is clearly trying to sidestep the legislative process by forcing a vote on the floor after her staff failed to make a good case against licenses in committee.

As law enforcement officials testified in recent House hearings, drivers' licenses for immigrants have proven to benefit public safety for all New Mexicans. It is the best way track immigrants' DWI's, traffic records, last known addresses, and outstanding warrants. All local, state, and federal law enforcement officials (even immigration agents), have access to MVD's database to identify, locate and apprehend individuals who are violating the law.

Immigrants who live, work, and pay taxes in New Mexico are complying with our state laws by getting drivers' licenses, buying insurance, and registering their vehicles. We would expect that our Governor would also comply with state laws that regulate the use of campaign funds."

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