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**Gov. Richardson to Sign Ban on Racial Profiling Today at 2:30 p.m.
New Mexico Will Join 22 States in Banning Bias-Based Profiling
Community Advocates and Organizations Applaud Governor and Legislators**

Santa Fe – Gov. Bill Richardson will sign legislation today to officially ban bias-based profiling in New Mexico. Advocates and organizations who supported the legislation plan to attend the 2:30 p.m. public signing at the governor's office in Santa Fe.

HB 428, the Prohibition of Profiling Practices Act, sponsored by Rep. Nathan Cote, D-Las Cruces, passed the Senate floor by 32-10 in the final hour of the legislative session. The bill previously passed the House floor 62-0 after an hour of impassioned debate from members.

"The criminal justice system disproportionately impacts people of color from arrest, to prosecution, to conviction," said Reena Szczepanski, director of Drug Policy Alliance New Mexico. "This bill offers the chance to improve the criminal justice system by adding an additional layer of protection, fairness, and equality."

New Mexico will join 22 other states in banning profiling practices by law enforcement officers and agencies.

"This legislation prohibits profiling on many bases, including not only culture, ethnicity, language, and race, but also disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and political affiliation," said Doris Fields, speaking on behalf of the New Mexico NAACP. "The passage of this bill is reflective of the progress we as a nation, a state, and a people are making toward righting our world, making our state what we know it can be, making ourselves live up to our true potential as compassionate and fair beings."

The legislation officially defines and bans bias-based profiling in New Mexico, and directs law enforcement agencies to develop policies, procedures, and training protocols to prevent and prohibit profiling from occurring. The bill also allows for oversight and investigation of profiling complaints by the Attorney General's office.

"Nothing ties the hands of law enforcement faster than losing the trust of the communities they serve. One of the quickest ways you shatter trust with your communities is through racial profiling," said Holly Beaumont, legislative advocate for the New Mexico Conference of Churches, "We believe that this new law will serve both our communities and law enforcement."

The NM NAACP and 18 other local organizations, including Drug Policy Alliance New Mexico, Somos Un Pueblo Unido, the NM Conference of Churches, Equality New Mexico, the Immigration Committee of the City of Santa Fe, Honor Our Pueblo Existence (HOPE), and Tewa Women United, applaud New Mexico legislators and Gov. Richardson for their support of the legislation.

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