

PRESS RELEASE 02/16/09

For Immediate Release  
Contact:  
Marcela Díaz  
505-670-9301  
*Somos un Pueblo Unido*

Hank Hughes  
505-660-8845  
NM Coalition to End Homelessness

Rev Holly Beaumont  
505-660-5018  
NM Conference of Churches

Tomás Rivera  
505-310-0609  
Santa Fe Living Wage Network

# **Press Conference and Rally to Announce the Start of Early Voting**

***February 18, 2009 1 PM In Front of City Hall***

**Santa Fe** - Please join Mayor David Coss and the members of United for Affordable Housing on February 18 to start voting for Affordable Housing. The City of Santa Fe is holding a special election on March 10 for Santa Feans to vote on the proposed Workforce Housing Funding Initiative. The initiative will create a source of funding for affordable housing by placing a 1% tax on the sales amount of a house that is over \$750,000. Early voting is from February 18 through March 6. Absentee voting has already started.

United for Affordable Housing is urging all voters in Santa Fe to get out for early voting. And to make voting fun on February 18 there will be food and Mariachis as well as inspiring speakers. Speaking at the press conference will be Mayor David Coss, Rev. Holly Beaumont of the New Mexico Conference of Churches, Hank Hughes from the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness, Omar Pérez from the Living Wage Network, a member of Somos un Pueblo Unido and others.

United for Affordable Housing is a coalition of local organizations including nonprofits and businesses that is encouraging voters to vote for the initiative. The members of United for Affordable Housing are the Santa Fe Living Wage Network, the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness, Somos Un Pueblo Unido, the Northern New Mexico Central Labor Council and the New Mexico Conference of Churches, HomeWise, the Santa Fe Community Housing Trust, Noble Real Estate and Western Equities.

Passing the Initiative on March 10th is expected to generate about \$1 million per year for affordable housing programs in Santa Fe. Programs will include home ownership assistance for workers and development of rental housing for the lowest income workers.

United for Affordable Housing believes that the Initiative is smart for Santa Fe because it not only helps our workforce live in Santa Fe, it also:

1. helps families, making it possible for young people to live in the town they grew up in and for older people to live near their children;
2. protects the environment by easing traffic and reducing commuting time;
3. benefits business because workers will spend their paychecks in Santa Fe;
4. helps business and government attract and keep qualified employees;
5. promotes community - keeping police, paramedics, firefighters and nurses close to those they serve and teachers close to those they teach;
6. preserves Santa Fe as a city that welcomes and cares for people of all ages and from all walks of life.

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