

State Senator Dede Feldman's

2007 Legislative Wrap-Up

See Inside for Yellow Questionnaire

Dear Friends, Neighbors & Constituents,

It hardly seems possible that 2007 is drawing to a close, but I guess we have to accept reality and forge ahead! This year's legislative session will be a short one devoted to budget and revenue items. We have less new revenue to work with this year—\$369 million—so I expect competition to be keen for new programs or expansions. Health Care Reform will take center stage this session as the Governor rolls out a proposal for universal coverage. I hope to play a major role in ironing out some agreements in this area, which looks like it will be very difficult. Much of my questionnaire this time is devoted to getting your opinions on health care, and I hope you will fill out the attached survey, detach, fold, affix stamp and send it back to me before I leave for the session on Jan. 14th. Or drop by my office in Santa Fe once the session begins. You can also call me in Santa Fe at **1-505-986-4300** or e-mail me at **dede.feldman@nmlegis.gov**.

During the interim I have been busy as the Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee, and as a member of the Health Coverage for New Mexicans Task Force, where we examined various coverage proposals, the escalating costs of health insurance and care, the shortage of doctors and other professionals, as well as Medicaid and other programs. A centerpiece of this work was a study done by an outside consultant, Mathematica, which concluded that the cost of going to a system that provides health coverage for all New Mexicans would be only incrementally more expensive than the present system. In the present system, 432,000 New Mexicans do not have health insurance!

The legislature will also take up some unfinished ethics and campaign finance business in January, following on last session's failure to act favorably on several important measures. Two of the bills which died last time (by the slimmest of majorities) were mine-limits on campaign contributions and open legislative conference committees. To keep the ball rolling, the Governor reconvened the Ethics Task Force which, once again, recommended these measures as well as others to establish an Ethics Commission, expand voluntary public campaign financing, provide legislative compensation and require more lobbyist disclosure. He'll put these measures on his agenda this time and I'll be there, fighting for their passage.

Meanwhile, I will try to keep in touch through my blog at <http://senatorfeldman.typepad.com> and my e-newsletter. If you can give me your e-mail address, I'll keep you in the loop. Include it on the constituent survey or drop me an e-mail so I'll have it right there.

Best Wishes for a Happy and Peaceful New Year. 2008 is bound to be exciting, with elections galore. As always, I am honored to serve you.

Your Senator,

Dede Feldman

Dede Feldman



Senator Feldman with senior constituents over 80, whom she hosted for a "Listening Lunch" in October.



Sen. Feldman this year received the Milagro Award from fellow Senators. The award was given for tackling tough issues, withstanding arduous debates, and bringing forward visionary legislation.

Sen. Feldman was also one of 22 women legislators from around the country honored with the Women Legislators Lobby (WILL) Pacesetter Award for her noteworthy legislative service, contributions to sound, progressive policy, and groundbreaking leadership in the states.

2008 Constituent Survey Inside ➡

2007 Legislative Success Stories



CREDIT SECURITY FREEZE

SB 448 & 165 allow consumers to freeze their credit report to avoid identity theft by mail thieves or others who can access these records and open accounts in their name. For details on how you can do this go to my web site at www.dedefeldman.com. Special thanks to the AG, AARP and other advocates who helped push this through.

SUSTAINABLE BUILDING TAX CREDIT

SB 543 provides an income or corporate tax credit for the owners of new residential or commercial buildings built to LEED or Green Build New Mexico standards.

AUTISM PROGRAMS

SB 164 eventually channeled \$2 million to various programs for children with autism, to enable better diagnoses, provide skill building, and support hard-pressed parents.

THE SMALL EMPLOYER INSURANCE PROGRAM

SB 428 fixed the program so that small businesses and non-profits could join the plan immediately even if they already had insurance. Previously membership was available only to those who didn't offer insurance or who dropped their insurance for one year before joining.

HPV COVERAGE

SB 407 mandates that insurance companies cover Human Papilloma Virus immunizations, which have recently been determined to prevent HPV and reduce the risk of cervical cancer in young girls, if they get the shots when they're between the ages of 9 to 14.

NEW MEXICO GROWN FRESH FRUITS & VEGETABLES

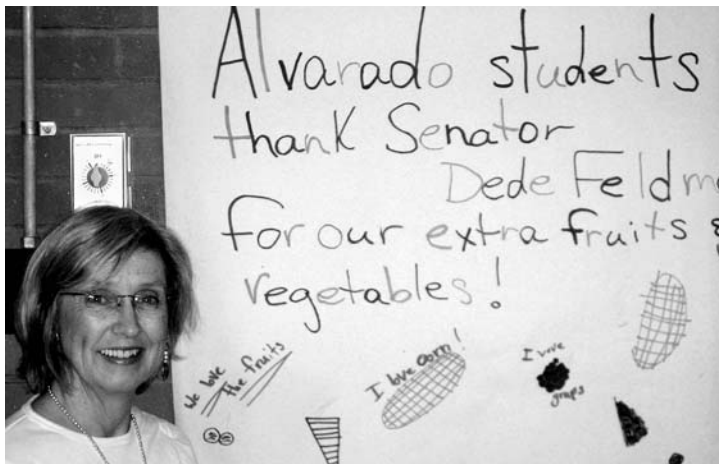
SB 90 allocates the funds for schools to provide NM produce and fruit to schoolchildren. The bill was originally statewide but I was able to get funds for a pilot project in the Valley cluster. Kids in these schools now have a fresh snack twice a week. It's a win/win for local farmers and good health. Diabetes and obesity are becoming big problems with school kids.

TRAILS LIABILITY

SB 486 will spur the use of trails for exercise and recreation by shifting the liability for any injuries from the MRGCD to trails managers.

CAPITAL OUTLAY

Last year I was able to obtain \$3.2 million for improvements to District 13 schools, libraries, parks, museums, housing and arts projects. Public School projects included, Valley, Garfield, Taft, Reginald Chavez, Duranes, Griegos, La Luz, Alvarado, Amy Biehl, Chaparral, Douglas Macarthur, Los Puentes, Los Ranchos, and Mission Avenue. Neighborhood projects included 4th St., Sawmill Land Trust, Los Duranes Park, Los Ranchos Open Space, Montano railroad station, quiet crossings, 12th and Menaul, West Side Open Space Center, Ditches with Trails, and the Rio Grande Nature Center. Museums and cultural facilities included VSA Community Center, Griegos library, Indian Pueblo Cultural Center, Alb. Museum, Natural History Museum, Keshet Dance, and the Working Classroom.



Senator Feldman with Alvarado Elementary students enjoying fresh fruit provided through her initiative.



Senator Feldman, Attorney General Gary King, and Consumer Protection Chief Karen Meyers explain Dede's bill, which allows you to freeze your credit report.



District 13 Questionnaire - 2008 Session

Please check the boxes next to your preferred choices. If more than one person is responding to this survey, please use a different color ink for each respondent.

1. State revenue is projected to grow by \$369 million next year. Although the economic picture is still bright, there is less new revenue to spend than in the past several years. Here are a few specific proposals for spending the money. Please indicate your priorities by ranking the following proposals, with 1 the highest.

- ___ \$330 million to add money to the state's education funding formula
- ___ \$125 million to cover inadequate funding for roads already authorized but not funded
- ___ \$44 million to provide health insurance to children eligible for Medicaid but not currently signed up
- ___ \$200 million to provide health care coverage for all uninsured New Mexicans (employers and Medicaid would pick up most of the tab)
- ___ \$33 million to build more prisons and jails to cover prison population growth
- ___ \$10 million for water adjudications to begin to tackle the backlog of water rights claims throughout the state
- ___ \$200 million to shore up the state retiree health care fund
- ___ \$36 million to fund more pre-kindergarten programs
- ___ Other _____

2. Efforts to stem global warming by reducing emissions, supporting alternative energy production and reducing energy consumption will be an issue in the coming session. Please indicate which of the following measures you support by checking Yes or No.

- Continued tax credits for the production of wind and solar energies Yes No
- Tax credits and incentives to restart uranium mining in New Mexico Yes No
- Mandated energy conservation measures for state buildings and schools to reduce energy usage 20% by 2015 Yes No
- Require all new schools to be "green" and provide funding to do so Yes No
- Mandate reduction of fuel usage by state vehicles by 20% by 2015 Yes No
- Tax incentives for the purchase of energy efficient heating and cooling systems Yes No
- A ban on incandescent light bulbs Yes No
- A requirement that all vehicles sold in New Mexico meet the cleaner California fuel efficiency standards by 2011 Yes No

3. This year, the legislature will consider health care reform and a plan to provide affordable, accessible coverage for all. What do you think are the most important elements in health care reform?

Please prioritize with 1 the highest.

- ___ Limiting the cost of insurance premiums
- ___ Expanding Medicaid and other public programs to those who are already eligible
- ___ Creating a central health care authority to control costs, set standards for care and coordinate coverage
- ___ Starting a Medicare-style health insurance program for all New Mexicans
- ___ Increasing prevention and chronic disease management
- ___ Maintaining the present system of health care insurance
- ___ Retaining and recruiting health care professionals
- ___ Allowing patients the choice of policies and/or providers
- ___ Requiring employers to provide insurance for their employees
- ___ Creating a single insurance pool to spread risk for all New Mexicans
- ___ other _____

4. Which of the following do you support to provide quality, accessible health care for everyone in New Mexico. Please indicate which of the following measures you support by checking Yes or No.

- A mandate that all New Mexicans must carry insurance (with premium assistance for those who cannot afford policies) Yes No
- A law that forbids insurance companies from refusing coverage to individuals with pre-existing conditions Yes No
- A requirement that HMOs and insurance companies devote a minimum percent (e.g. 85-90%) of their revenue to medical care, and not to administration or profit Yes No
- A requirement that doctors, dentists and other health care providers accept Medicaid Yes No
- Allowing employers and individuals to buy into the state employee plan and/or a Medicaid benefit plan Yes No
- Requiring employers to provide insurance coverage for their employees or pay a fee to the state so workers could purchase insurance on their own Yes No
- Restricting premium hikes based on health status and experience to no more than 10% rather than the current 20% Yes No

5. How should a comprehensive insurance system in New Mexico be financed? Please indicate which of the following measures you support by checking Yes or No.

- Payroll taxes like Medicare Yes No
- Contributions from employers equivalent to what they would have to spend to cover their employees Yes No
- Contributions from hospitals and health care facilities who will no longer have to cover indigent and charity care Yes No
- Increased gross receipts taxes Yes No
- Taxes on soft drinks (currently categorized as "food" and therefore exempt) Yes No
- Other _____

6. The Ethics and Campaign Finance Task Force continued to work on unfinished business this interim and suggested several reforms. Please indicate which of the following measures you support by checking Yes or No.

- Expanding the voluntary system of public financing to statewide offices (Governor, Lt. Governor, Secretary of State, Land Commissioner, Attorney General, Auditor, Treasurer) Yes No
- Limiting campaign contributions to candidates from individuals, corporations, unions and PACs to \$2,300 per election cycle (the same level used in federal campaigns) Yes No
- Establishing an ethics commission Yes No
- Opening legislative conference committees to the public and press Yes No
- Requiring lobbyists to disclose their clients and compensation Yes No

7. Do you favor increased penalties for gang crimes and gang recruitment? Yes No

8. Do you favor tax breaks for the Desert Rock coal-fired plant now proposed for the Navajo reservation? Yes No

9. Do you favor mental health background reports for people purchasing firearms? Yes No

10. Are you a supporter of the Rail Runner train? Yes No

Use the space below for any other comments for Dede

Here's my e-mail address. Please keep me informed:

Printing, postage & handling of this mailing was paid for by Dede Feldman, and not done at government expense. Any contributions for this purpose gleefully accepted!



District 13 Constituent Survey 2008 Session



1821 Meadowview NW
Albuquerque, NM 87104-2511

Presorted
Standard
U.S. Postage
PAID
ABQ, NM
Permit No. 260

Questionnaire Inside

Happy New Year!

★★★★★ LEGISLATIVE FORUM ★★★★★

Thursday Jan. 3, 2008, 6:30 pm

North Valley Senior Center
3825 4th St. NW

District 13 Residents...

Join Dede & local legislators for answers to your questions about the 2008 session.

IMPORTANT WEB INFORMATION

Dede's blog:
senatorfeldman.typepad.com
for regular updates from Dede

www.legis.state.nm.us for the
official legislative site for
schedules, bill drafts, informa-
tion about legislators

Dede's web site:
www.dedefeldman.com



CONTACT DEDE AT THE LEGISLATURE:

Call: 1-505-986-4300

Write:

Senator Dede Feldman
NM State Capitol
Santa Fe, NM 87503

E-Mail: dede.feldman@nmlegis.gov



Senator Dede Feldman
1821 Meadowview NW
Albuquerque, NM 87104-2511

Please return to:

PLACE
41¢
STAMP
HERE



Please tape here before mailing ↓