



State of New Mexico  
*Office of the Governor*

Bill Richardson  
Governor

April 9, 2009

Alfredo Vigil, MD  
Cabinet Secretary  
NM Department of Health  
1190 S. St. Francis Drive, Suite N-4100  
Santa Fe, NM 87505

Dear Secretary Vigil:

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act recently passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama included an estimated \$19 billion funding for Health Information Technology. The funds are available through a competitive grant process and could add substantially to New Mexico's share of stimulus funding.

To take full advantage of the opportunities offered by these funds, I have designated the New Mexico Department of Health as the lead to oversee the process of designing programs and preparing grant applications to make sure New Mexico is a strong contender for these funds. New Mexico is a frontrunner in the use of health information technology and I see the adoption of electronic medical records and health information exchange as a cornerstone in my vision of healthcare reform. The department will ensure that New Mexico not only complies with every aspect of the law regarding accountability and transparency, but will also see that we receive the maximum possible amount of funding.

I am directing all agencies and private sector applicants for these funds to coordinate their efforts through the Department of Health. This will ensure that New Mexico presents the best possible case for funding.

The information we have received from the federal government is that collaborative grants with good geographic distribution will have the best chance of receiving funding. Thus, I am further directing the Department of Health to consult, as appropriate, with other organizations engaged in the promotion and distribution of health information technology, including the Telehealth and Health Information Technology Commission, the Center for Telehealth and Cybermedicine Research, the New Mexico Health Information Collaborative, the New Mexico Medical Society, the New Mexico Medical Review Association and the Telehealth Alliance, as well as the Economic Development Department. These groups have made significant contributions to the use health information technology in the state and I expect them to do so as we move forward.

The projects funded under the ARRA will not only provide jobs and economic benefits to the citizens of New Mexico; they will also move us closer to the goal of quality healthcare for all at

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affordable prices. With this opportunity, New Mexico will continue to lead in the use technology that benefits all of its citizens, including those in rural areas and those whose health is most at risk.

Sincerely,



Bill Richardson  
Governor