

February 15, 2006

To: NMSU Faculty, Staff, and Students

From: Mike Martin

Subject: Update from Santa Fe

We are very near the end of the 2006 Legislative Session. Things remain much the same as in my last report:

- Salary increase - 4.5 percent if it holds up. I will likely recommend a split between cost-of-living and a merit component.
- Tuition credit - 3.0 percent
- BR&R - \$60 million systemwide
- Endowment match - \$20 million systemwide
- Critical infrastructure - \$20 million systemwide
- You can check out the Legislative Web page (<http://legis.state.nm.us>) to get further details on the capital outlay bill and House Bill 2 and 2 Junior.
- It is unclear yet if Governor Richardson will sign or veto any part of our legislation.

Let me comment on two issues:

1. Health insurance – Those who allege we are not doing all we can to reduce health care costs are fundamentally in error. We are working hard to do so for two reasons: (a) we all pay for health insurance, and everyone wants to save money, and (b) more importantly, for every dollar we save, we will have 65 cents to invest in programs, new faculty and staff, and in all those things that make this a better university.

But we will not implement change until we are assured that there will be no adverse consequences and that no one will be left behind.

2. Frenger Food Court – We appreciate all the opinions and concerns about the management of Frenger Food Court. This input will be taken seriously by those charged with managing our auxiliary enterprises. We will, however, manage all such enterprises within the context of “best practices.” We will always seek the most efficient and effective means of operating the business side of NMSU so that every available dollar can be utilized to advance our core teaching, research, and outreach missions.

We will provide a more detailed summary of this year’s legislative outcomes as soon as they are available.