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New Mexico Notes

New Mexico after five long years is now not in a severe draught situation and you can drive from North, South, East and West in New Mexico and it is green, what a relief and a very welcome site. The 2016 State elections are already heating up with Senators and Representatives all holding fund raisers. The Republicans in the House are determined to hold their majority that they gained for the first time in 60 years and the Democrats are determined to regain their majority that they held for 60 years. They have learned that being in the minority is not any fun. The Democrats were used to controlling all the committee chairmanships and having a majority in each committee thus they could control all legislation—not so now.

In the Senate, the Democrats have a 25 to 16 and it has led to gridlock with the Republican House and Administration. The Republicans have put together a team that is requiring a candidate for every Senate seat to run in 2016 and with Governor Susanna Martinez out raising millions of dollars to defeat as many Democrat Senators as possible so that Republicans can take over the Senate, too. 2016 is already building up to be the most expensive election in New Mexico history.

The interim Legislative Committees have started meeting and now with 31 interim committees, there are sometimes three or four meetings every week. It becomes very hectic especially now when they are conducting meetings all over the State.

We are starting the rule-making for the 5% diesel mandate that was passed in 2008 and was to go into effect in 2010, but has never been enforced because of lack of sufficient biodiesel. The department of Standards and Consumer Services Division of the New Mexico Department of Agriculture wants to propose and write rules in case the mandate is implemented.

In the 2015 Legislature, HB 243 was passed and a provision in the Bill has given the retailers the power to form their own co-ops for purchasing alcohol. This would give the smaller buyer a chance to have some buying power to compete with the big boxes. We will start meeting with the State August 10th.

There has been a resolution introduced by Albuquerque City Councilor Isaac Benton and Klarissa Pena which is one of the most anti-business resolutions I have ever seen. It would require businesses to post schedules in writing at least three weeks in advance for full and part time, seasonal, and temporary employees. It also would hold a secret ballot vote for employees to adopt an alternative schedule such as four 10-hour shifts or three 12-hour shifts. It would also offer additional work to existing employees before hiring any new ones (and pay, I assume, time and ½ and allows employees to swap shifts at will regardless of

their skills). It would also pay idle employees \$150 every two weeks to keep them on the payroll when there is no work. It would allow employees to accrue up to 56 hours of sick time annually and all this would be enforced by the City of Albuquerque. As you can see, this is a far reach and goes to show everyone not only do they want to legislate what we pay our employees but now they want to micromanage and tell us how to run our businesses.

NMPMA Convention

The NMPMA Convention and Trade Show was held August 17 - 19 at the Marriott Pyramid North in Albuquerque. It was a very successful convention, as we sold all of the venter booths in early July and we had more golfers signed up to play than in 2014. Convention speakers Kathryn Roberts - Resource Protection Division Director from the NM Environmental Dept, Anthony J. Parra - Deputy Director of the NM Dept of Agriculture, and Michael Cox - Account Executive, Association Risk Management Services for Federated Insurance gave attendees some great updates and resources. We extend a special thank you to all our sponsors, whose generous support makes our convention possible. We are now looking forward to the 2016 NMPMA Convention - to be held at Sandia Resort and Casino in Albuquerque, August 22nd - 24th. With this move, we will boost our trade show area from 11,000 to 14,000 square feet, to meet the increased demand for booth space. We hope to see you in Albuquerque next year!