



**State of New Mexico**  
***OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR***

**Hector H. Balderas, State Auditor**

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**Auditor Balderas Announces New Mexico Rural Accountability Task Force**

Santa Fe, NM— In response to rural communities throughout New Mexico requesting assistance with the annual auditing process, Auditor Balderas announced today the formation of the New Mexico Rural Accountability Task Force.

“Rural communities throughout the state incur great financial burdens and responsibilities and have limited resources to complete the annual audit mandate,” Balderas said. “As Auditor, I will make every effort to work with these communities to find solutions, and the creation of the Task Force is the first step. By initiating dialogue and maximizing resources, every community in New Mexico can achieve full accountability.”

All government agencies are required by state law to have an annual audit conducted of their financial affairs. The agencies are also required to pay the audit costs, which can greatly impact the budgets of smaller agencies such as land grants and soil and water conservation districts.

The task force will gather information and hear testimony from citizens across the state on the effects of the annual audit requirement on rural communities. Balderas has requested that the task force examine approaches to solving the problem and make recommendations, which may include proposed changes to state law.

The Task Force has members from every corner of the state. The members include:

- Mayor Phillip Burch, Mayor of Artesia
- Arturo Archuleta, Director of Planning, NCNMEDD
- Paula Garcia, Executive Director, New Mexico Acequia Association
- Dusty Hunt, Commissioner for Grant County Soil & Water District
- Juan Fuentes, Mesilla Town Clerk Treasurer
- Phil Griego, State Senator
- Merry Jo Fahl, Manager, Sierra Soil & Water District
- Juan J. Griego, Managing Partner, Griego Professional Services, LLC
- Ronald L. Miller, Managing Partner, Miller & Associates, CPA, PC
- Janice McCrary, Chairwoman, NM Society of CPAs
- Robert Apodaca, Director, DFA Local Government Division
- Dianne Moore, City Councilor, Santa Fe
- Keith Gardner, State Representative
- Joni Marie Gutierrez, State Representative
- Al Park, State Representative
- Patrick Banegas, Superintendent, Anthony Water & Sanitation District
- Nestor Romero, CEO Payroll Company Inc.

The Task Force will hold its first meeting in July and will subsequently schedule town hall meetings in different regions of the state. A final report with recommendations will be submitted to the State Auditor in October 2008.

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