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Endorsement of Native American Redistricting Principles and Proposed Maps

The Pueblo of Laguna Council endorses the attached Native American Redistricting Principles and Proposed Maps for the New Mexico Senate, House and Public Regulatory Commission. The right to vote and participate fully in the electoral process is a fundamental element of our democracy. Because of the historic electoral discrimination Native Americans have suffered, redistricting must protect our members' ability to make their vote count. The Voting Rights Act gives Native Americans the right to demand the drawing of districts that give us an opportunity to elect Legislators who will be responsive to our needs – legislators of our choice. The attached maps create Native American opportunity districts in six House Districts, all of which are majority Native American, and four Senate Districts, three of which are majority Native American and one which is an Influence District.

The Pueblo of Laguna also supports the collaboration and tribal unity that has led to the development of the attached plans. We know that working together, New Mexico's Indian Nations and Pueblos are stronger. We share the same communities of interest flowing from our historic and contemporary relationships with each other; our shared commitment to strengthening tribal jurisdiction; and our commitment to cultural preservation and responsible natural resource development.

Our relations with the State are better when we are represented in the Legislature by Native Americans and Legislators dedicated to representing our interests. For this reason, the Native American Redistricting Workgroup focused on strengthening the majority Native American and influence districts. All of New Mexico's tribes benefit from these districts. To ensure the continued strength of these districts, the effective percentages of Native Americans in these districts must be kept as close to 64% as is possible. The attached maps – worked on by representatives from a cross section of the Tribes in New Mexico – achieve the goal of drawing effective districts with total Native American population at 64% and above.

The Pueblo of Laguna commits itself to promoting the ideals in the Principles and the Proposed Maps during the upcoming legislative special session on redistricting. The Laguna Council has authorized a redistricting team that will work with the Legislature, the other Tribes, and the Governor to create a map that honors the Voting Rights Act and creates the proposed Native American districts.

Richard Luarkie
Governor