New Mexico First is a statewide nonprofit public policy organization, unique in its origin, history, and evolution. Co-founded in 1986 by U.S. Senators Jeff Bingaman (D) and Pete Domenici (R), the organization is best known for statewide town halls and nonpartisan policy research on critical issues facing the state. New Mexico First brings together people from all walks of life to identify practical solutions to important issues. NM First town halls allow participants to share their best ideas and wisdom and together develop consensus-based recommendations for policy change.

How NM First Town Halls Work

Planning

New Mexico First engages citizens to identify the focus topic and recruit a Planning Committee that is representative of the state's diversity and geography, and

Background Report

Participants receive a background report prior to attending the town hall, to assure that everyone shares a basic understanding of the topic.

Community Conversations

New Mexico First staff also host virtual and in-person community conversations across the state to ensure a diversity of perspectives are represented.

2-day Town Hall

At the town hall, participants listen to presentations from issue experts and frontline stakeholders and then break into small discussion groups to develop and refine solutions. By the end of the town hall, participants reach consensus on a list of recommendations for

Implementation Team

Following town halls, New Mexico First recruits a diverse team of individuals and organizations to refine recommendations and work with policy makers to translate

Transforming Behavioral Health in New Mexico:

A pathway toward hope and healing

June 15-16, 2022, New Mexico First convened a diverse cross-section of stakeholders in a hybrid (inperson/virtual) town hall-style conference. This format allowed stakeholders from around the state to participate without traveling. Using a <u>background report</u> with research and statistics on mental and

behavioral health in the state as a starting point, the gathering brought people together to produce concrete, actionable, recommendations.

New Mexico First hosted Community Conversations in Grants, Gallup, Las Cruces, Deming, Hobbs, and two detention centers in the months before the Town Hall to gather community feedback on the topic and initial recommendations.

The Town Hall concluded with eight consensus recommendations, along with multiple other recommendations that will be workshopped and processed by New Mexicans to develop comprehensive and coherent solutions to our behavioral health challenges.

CONSENSUS: When 85% of participants can say: "I believe you understand my point of view.

I believe I understand your point of view.

Whether or not I prefer this decision, I support it because it was arrived at openly and fairly and is the best alternative for us at this time."

In other words:

"I may not love it, but I can live with it!"

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