

February 6, 2010

HOUSE EXECUTIVE MESSAGE NO. 87

The Honorable Ben Luján and
Members of the House of Representatives
State Capitol Bldg.
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Honorable Speaker Luján and Members of the House:

I have this day SIGNED:

HOUSE BILL 1, with emergency clause,

which was enacted during the Forty-Ninth Legislature, Second Session, 2010, except the following part or parts, item or items, which I hereby veto pursuant to the authority granted me in Article IV, Section 22 of the Constitution of New Mexico:

On page 6, line 3, I have vetoed the word “provided” and all of lines 4 through 7.

On page 9, I have vetoed all of lines 7 through 10.

These provisions would have provided the Legislature with the flexibility to move money among legislative agencies and budget categories. I understand the need for this flexibility during these tight budget conditions, which is why I did not veto similar provisions in the last regular session’s feed bill, Laws 2009, Chapter 1. It is also why I sought during the last regular session similar flexibility for the executive branch for the current fiscal year. The Legislature, however, refused that request to put executive and legislative branches on equal footing. This hampered the ability of executive agencies to manage their budgets during these trying times.

While the budgets of individual legislative agencies were reduced, the reductions were offset by increases in other recurring appropriations, making the total legislative operating budgets for FY11 flat compared with the adjusted FY10 operating budgets. I am disappointed that the reductions for the legislative branch budgets are not equitable with the reductions required of Executive agencies.

All branches of State government are in this together. We must all be given the tools necessary to weather this continuing storm. I therefore urge the Legislature to take up the matter of budget flexibility for the legislative and other branches in the General Appropriation Act, where the needs of all agencies can be evaluated and met equitably at the same time.

