



Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-New Mexico

Rocky Mountain Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

1701 Arroyo Chamiso Santa Fe, NM 87505

Phone/Fax 505.984.8005

info@lutheranadvocacynm.org

www.lutheranadvocacynm.org

## ***Summary of 2019 Legislation relating to our Advocacy Agenda***

### **Affordable Housing & Homelessness:**

**SB212** (Sen. Nancy Rodriguez) requested \$10 million for the State Housing Trust Fund which provides funding for affordable housing projects in our state.

✓ **\$2 million for the State Housing Trust Fund was appropriated.**

### **Family-Sustaining Income:**

**HJR1** (Rep. Antonio Maestas & Rep. Javier Martinez) proposed a constitutional amendment asking voters to authorize an additional 1% of the income from the Land Grant Permanent Fund to be used for quality early childhood programs.

**HJR1 passed the House Floor by a vote of 41-27 and was tabled in the Senate Rules Committee.**

**HB31** (Rep. Miguel Garcia) proposed to raise the state minimum wage incrementally: to \$10 on July 1, 2019; to \$11 on July 1, 2020; to \$12 on July 1, 2021 and then it would be indexed to the cost of living. HB31 passed the Senate Public Affairs Committee and was tabled in the Senate Corporations Committee. The Senate passed SB437 to increase the minimum wage by lesser amounts without indexing.

✓ **A conference committee and the Governor worked out a compromise for SB437 that passed both the House & Senate and was signed into law by the Governor. The final version of SB437 increases the state minimum wage to \$9 on January 1, 2020; \$10.50 on January 1, 2021; \$11.50 on January 1, 2022; and to \$12 on January 1, 2023 with no indexing to inflation. There are also small increases to the tipped wage credit. Increasing the minimum wage to \$12 is a victory for low wage workers across our state.**

**SB85** (Sen. Liz Stefanics & Rep. Christine Trujillo) removes the exemptions for domestic workers that are now included in the state labor laws. This means that domestic service workers would have the same protections under law that other workers have.

✓ **SB85 passed the Senate & House and was signed into law by the Governor.**

**HB150** (Rep. Georgene Louis) amends the Small Loan Act & the Bank Installment Loan Act and makes the provisions about fees and language more consistent; requires sufficient reporting to the Financial Institutions Division to enforce consumer protections; and clarifies borrower rights when a lender renews a loan.

✓ **HB150 passed the House & Senate and was signed into law by the Governor.**

## Health Care:

LAM-NM advocates that the state Medicaid program be fully funded. \$61 million was the amount projected by the Human Services Department to fully fund Medicaid for the upcoming state fiscal year.

✓ **HB2, as enacted into law, includes about \$52 million for Medicaid.**

**HB68** (Rep. Liz Thomson) requested an appropriation of \$25 million to be used to address the DD (Developmental Disabilities) Waiver waiting list. This program provides much-needed services for people with developmental disabilities.

✓ **HB2, as enacted into law, includes \$7.5 million for the DD Waiver waiting list.**

**HB416** (Rep. Deborah Armstrong, Rep. Brian Egolf & Rep. Nathan Small) and **SB405** (Sen. Jerry Ortiz y Pino & Sen. Jacob Candelaria) sought to establish a state Medicaid Buy-In program to allow low-income to obtain health insurance coverage. **HB416** passed the House Health & Human Services Committee and was tabled in the House Appropriations & Finance Committee. **SB405** passed the Senate Public Affairs Committee and was not heard in the Senate Finance Committee.

✓ **Planning and study funding for this vital program is included in the funding bills enacted into law.**

**HB308** (Reps. Doreen Gallegos & Gail Armstrong) creates the mid-level profession of dental therapist which will help to meet the dental health care needs of underserved New Mexicans.

✓ **HB308 passed the House & Senate and was signed into law by Governor.**

## Hunger:

The State SNAP Supplement program serves over 14,000 seniors and people with disabilities with state funds that increases their minimum federal SNAP benefit to \$25 per month. About \$400,000 was needed to keep this crucial program benefit at its current level.

✓ **\$402,000 for this program is included in HB2, as enacted into law.**

**SB585** (Sen. John Arthur Smith & Sen. Stuart Ingle) would reimpose the food tax. LAM-NM opposed **SB585**. **SB585 was not heard in committee and its provisions are not included in HB6, the tax legislation that was enacted into law.**

## Tax Policy:

The failed tax policies of the last 15 years have shifted the burden to middle and low-income families. School funding was down dramatically, higher education was cut by 30%, \$400 million was cut from health care, behavioral health services have been dismantled; and unmet needs have been ignored. Oil & gas provide major resources but make New Mexico depend on a boom-and-bust cycle. We need more stable sources of revenue that are sustainable & provide enough revenue to meet the needs of our state, particularly the most vulnerable. LAM-NM supported proposals to make the personal income tax more progressive; increase the Working Families Tax Credit and the Low Income Comprehensive Tax Rebate; raise the corporate tax rates; and other provisions.

**HB6** (Rep. Jim Trujillo) started as an omnibus tax package which included a doubling of the Working Families Tax Credit, more progressive tax personal income tax rates, a repeal of the capital gains tax deduction, an internet sales tax, and a new dependent deduction among the bill's provisions. The original HB6 also would have substantially increased general fund revenue with more stable and sustainable income and less dependence on volatile oil & gas revenue.

✓ **HB6 passed the House and was heavily amended in the Senate. A conference committee came to an agreement during the final hours of the session. While not as comprehensive as the original HB6, the final version of HB6, which was enacted into law, includes an increase of the Working Families Tax Credit from 10% to 17% of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit, the creation of an additional Personal Income Tax bracket for high income taxpayers (contingent on the amount of increase in the general fund recurring revenues in SFY20), a reduction of the capital gains tax deduction from 50% to 40%, an internet sales tax, and a new dependent deduction.**

### **Criminal Justice:**

**SB96** (Sen. Bill O'Neill) prohibits most employers from including a question about whether or not the applicant is a felon on an initial application. That information could be taken into account later in the hiring process but not used to initially eliminate an applicant.

✓ **SB96 passed the Senate & House and was signed into law by the Governor.**

**HB364** (Rep. Antonio Maestas) restricts the use of solitary confinement in our prisons, jails, & detention centers by prohibiting using solitary confinement for pregnant women, children, and people with a severe mental illness.

✓ **HB364 passed the House & Senate and was signed into law by the Governor.**

**HB56** (Reps. Gail Chasey & Christine Trujillo) provides that minors who are victims of human trafficking cannot be charged with the crime of prostitution.

✓ **HB56 passed the House & Senate and was signed into law by the Governor.**