

Food, Hunger, Water, Agriculture Policy
General Action Team
7.2.20 ♦ 12:00 – 1:30 pm
Meeting Notes

Facilitator: Lilly Irvin-Vitela, New Mexico First

Notes: Sharon Berman, Xavier Vallejo and Wendy Wintermute, New Mexico First
In Attendance:

Federal – Brenda McKenna with Congresswoman Deb Haaland’s Office

State Departments- Zak Barela, NMDA; Geneva Becenti, NM Indian Affairs Dept.

Legislators- Rep. Melanie Stansbury

Food Providers- Katy Anderson, Roadrunner Food Bank

Faith-based Organizations- Ellen Buelow, Interfaith Hunger Coalition

Philanthropy/Funders- Valerie Rangel, New Mexico Foundation

Agriculture Stakeholders and Food Providers- Pam Roy, Farm to Table and the New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council; Brent Van Dyke, Gov Affairs, NM Association of Conservation Districts; Roy Montibon, The Montibon Company; Kyle Jim, Dine Introspective; Andrea Nash, Roadrunner Food Bank; Adelante

Policy/Advocacy Organizations- Xavier Vallejo and Wendy Wintermute, New Mexico First; Tsiporah Nephesh, New Mexico Thrives; Derek Lin and Emily Wildau, NM Voices for Children

Academia- Diana Gonzales-Pacheco from UNM; Bruce Hinrichs, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service

Volunteers- Jane Braithwaite and Barbara Leppala with Rep. Melanie Stansbury.

Share one thing you’re hoping to get out of the call today

- Tsiporah: Hope we talk policy and move forward. Food, housing, water underpins everything; a minimum. So much potential here. I want us to be bold.
- Brent: Lot of things we can do without, but food, water, shelter we absolutely can’t do without. There are people who struggle with these. If we can build on the progress of the last 6-12 months and make food a priority.
- Valerie: Agree with Tsiporah. Now is the time to tackle these issues in creative ways. It’s long overdue and it would be devastating for the state to see these conditions exist after hundreds of years. Why don’t people have a basic right to water.
- Ellen: I don’t know how to connect the real needs out there with the perceived need. Some have no idea that there is real hunger out there. We have a lot of work to do.
- Bruce: Ditto all the things that have been said. I hope we find and hear some things where we can bring resources to, how we can partner with folks to get things done.
- Kyle: From Shiprock. I want to learn from everyone to see what’s going on, build networks to help our people, advocate for our families. Everyone has their specialized services, and we can all work together. About to make some care package deliveries soon. Coordinating the ER week 16, advocating for families to receive food, water,



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baby supplies, educational supplies for the children, supplies to support farmers and ranchers. Served 1500 families. Food sovereignty plan supports farmers and gardeners with land management; they return produce to families. Video series for chefs to share menus, cooking with the families. Stay home and eat healthy. Next week on Friday we're hosting a \$600 million protest in Window Rock, July 10th, 9:00 at Navajo Nation Museum and walk to Window Rock monument and nation's HQ. Submit a proposal on what elected officials should do with \$200 million.

- Jane: Food comes up constantly in national and state news. I'm happy and relieved to know we have this group going. I've seen progress, and my goal is to continue to see progress. I know it's meant a lot to Rep. Stansbury, and she'll be looking to what she can do in the upcoming session.
- Melanie: Jane said it all. My big hope from the policy perspective – if there are things we can do in the upcoming special session, it's important that we get this work underway now. If you have ideas about what should happen, we need to start compiling those ideas now. We're setting up a meeting with Sec. Whittie and NMSU around food innovation.
- Diana: Nutrition prof at UNM. Where can we direct students to policy issues or other ways they can help with ongoing projects.
- Zak: Marketing specialist for NMDA. Knowledge and further understanding of needs and how to provide resources.
- Emily: This group is really energizing to me, sharing what they're doing, how policy and advocacy works together, and we won't accept that families don't have what they need.
- Derek: Every time I'm in one of these meetings, I'm humbled by the different perspectives I take with me. Everyone is coming from this with a different perspective. A necessary part of this work to get the broadest understanding of how to address this issue.
- Geneva: Listening. Thanks for the exciting, amazing work you do for NM communities. NM Indian Affairs is putting together a spotlight of communities that are working together around food, water, and meeting other community needs. I want to know more about this. WW
- Anna: putting it in the light of humanitarian work. Public leaders need to be stronger with real tangible policies to bring outcomes to farmers. New frameworks, like cooperative business models.
- Barbara: Rep Stansbury's intern. Enjoy learning from the calls, how change is effected.
- Kary: Hearing the other perspectives of those involved in the work. Helps to focus me on those deeper systemic issues: equity; how do we get nutritious food out to all the communities in an equitable way.
- Roy: Fascinating to hear what everyone's working on, everyone's point of view. Working on ag and food distribution projects. Farmers as grant writers. Working on Lilly on a community conversation. Collectively, I think we're moving in a very positive direction, all the energy directed to solving these problems.
- Pam: Farm to Table, Ag Policy Council: I appreciate the community. I so appreciate hearing what you all are looking forward to what inspires you, the collective wisdom, the creativity. Opportunities for students. July 22nd advocacy presentation; advocacy training associated with the legislative session in the early part of next year.
- Brenda: Rep. Deb Holland. Simply to learn how best we can help facilitate anything in response to needs.
- Xavi: I have a grasp of concepts but not how things are done in a practical sense, so I'm looking forward to learning from you.
- Sharon: Such a great hopeful feeling that wants to listen to each other, to great ideas, some of which we've seen take flight.



Rep. Stansbury: There are a lot of legislators and a governor who all care very deeply about food and hunger issues. The stars have aligned and all our branches of government caring about the issue in a systems way.

We got our start last year in June, I had a series of conversations which turned into workshops. We had a goal to pass a memorial and whether it passed or not the group wanted to continue the research. What did we learn about the infrastructure problems and is there a set of things, such as incentives, deconstructing barriers, to address infrastructure problems. We had spoken about a food infrastructure bill for the 2021 session. I would like to advance a food infrastructure bill this year, but I don't know what it looks like. We can reintroduce the memorial, although I think this group is doing what the memorial set out to do. If we are going to expend political capital this year, it should be substantive.

Last session the workgroup helped tee up a number of budget initiatives. We will be in the opposite situation in 2021 as we are seeing a budget deficit. There are two ways to approach it. 1: do no harm; 2: if we look at the portfolio of programs that address ag food production/food distribution/meal programs, how could we reconfigure that would make more sense and solve problems better Now is the time to rethink how to solve the problems going forward. We have willing partners from philanthropy that we haven't had at the table before. That's how I'd like to see things move in the next 6 months.

The pandemic has highlighted water security. We are starting to convene a water group. There is federal and state policy that needs to be addressed. Includes advocacy at the federal level for Indian Health Service and more, and at state level, expanding tribal infrastructure fund and others. Putting together a set of policy asks for both the federal and state government.

Report from Philanthropy Policy Group

Valerie: We keep meeting in the philanthropy groups, keep bringing up the same issues: where are the gaps where philanthropy can step in. It wound up in my lap that I could do some outreach and figure out issues such as cold storage. I'd like to remind rep. Stansbury that the water infrastructure is not a problem. It's an opportunity to address social justice, get more information out about what mechanisms are working, community needs and how to address those better. My suggestion would be to have another conversation to figure out what's appropriate and who to invite to table, and how to point folks to resources. Jicarilla Apache Tribe and the To'Hajiilee Navajo and other communities without infrastructure and electricity. We could leverage state, federal and philanthropic funds and look at long term stable solutions.

- Roadrunner and Food Depot did education about the needs.

Anna: I'm a community land use planner so I always love to use the framework of planning in looking at infrastructure and elevating statewide information on a map. How would a map that has little pins on it showing senior center, another layer showing head start, and then the capacity of refrigeration/cold storage. The state and the tribe has their own databases. Getting these maps would be helpful to see where we could get cold storage.

Valerie was volunteered to get the cold storage maps together.

- And I mentioned the surplus military vehicles, the water trucks. Things like that can be tapped into from the military, since there are a lot of military projects going on in our states, I think it's time for them to give back to the communities.



Recap:

- Think about a meaningful bill for the next session
- Think about budget initiatives – project what’s essential, but also how can we be more innovative, looking at cross-sector needs, coordinate efforts
- Use policy subgroup to develop specific policy and report back to the bigger group. Anyone is willing to participate in the group. It’s really challenging at the legislative level to synthesize policy ideas without concrete examples. “We need [this] in [this place].” Showtime to get things down on paper. Send ideas.

Lilly: Our work focuses on three broad areas:

- Policies that address root causes
- Strengthening food and water relief and recovery
- Investing in local food systems and resilient local agriculture

Rep. Stansbury: it’s challenging for the legislators to synthesize ideas into policy ideas without concrete ideas. If you have problems/challenges/concrete ideas, send those ideas to Rep. Stansbury ([add email](#)) and Lilly Irvin-Vitela (lilly@nmfirst.org)

Derek: We released a new fact sheet explaining why food tax is a bad idea for our state. It’s a 4-pager, begins with broad overview and who is most affected by food insecurity. Then it gets to nitty gritty, bringing a racial/equity lens. Food tax doesn’t affect all families equally. Families that make less than \$15,000/year spend a larger portion of their budget on the food Tax. We furnish data that explains how the food tax will disproportionately affect black and native American households. It’s not an equitable approach to raise revenue for the state. Derek added that they’d follow up the fact sheet with a larger brief. Food tax fact sheet: <https://www.nmvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Food-Insecurity-4-pager-web.pdf>

- Tziporah noted that she had seen the previous handout and this was a great update. It highlights how racism is a factor in who is affected.

Review of Special Session – Budget

See NM First Analysis – https://nmfirst.org/legislative_updates/new-mexico-first-policy-domains-special-session-overview

Lilly: pre special session we had desire economic and social service policy that is considerate. NMF did a summary of HB1 and SB5. We look at multiple policy domains. There was a more nuanced approach. Cuts to DOH and HSD were not the same. There was thoughtful consideration of how to use federal relief package for core basic needs.

Rep. Stansbury: The legislature looked for places to cut that would minimize harm. Did cut 2021 budget by 4%. It’s really now up to the Executive to decide how to implement the budget cuts. We know we’ll have at least \$600 million shortfall but we could have up to \$2.4 billion shortfall next year. We’re going to be in a bad situation for 2-3 years, maybe more.



Pam Roy: Farm to Table and NM Ag Policy Group have analyses. Had a conversation with Sec. Witte. What are you going to do with these cuts? Premise: No one gets cut out. We'll have to work together and coordinate. We can be really creative. Lots of federal dollars coming into the state, federal non-emergency dollars that will continue to come in. We're learning how programs can be transitioned, adapted, e.g., school food pick-ups.

Rep: Stansbury reflected on the budget and explained how they balanced the budget was addressed with in the special session. It's up to the executive of each department to decide how the budget is applied. Call them today and let them know why they shouldn't take money away from programs. We are looking to have to cut the budget more.

Pam reiterated that it was important to have conversations with the agencies. She and Lilly are happy to help people think about it and figure out who to speak with at the agencies. Make cuts equitably and make sure no one is cut out. Understand that everybody is in this together. (See analysis in appendix.)

Bruce said that the extension service created partnership between state county and federal to help people with all things from ag, youth development, home-making skills etc. Because it's a 3-way partnership. When you see county and state dollars diminish as they right now, please help by putting in a good word with the County Commission put for Extension with County policy makers?? It's very helpful. Our budget cycle has already started

Anna: No cutoffs of funding through WADA (federal allocation of water through the states). Folks should not have their water turned off. There are ways to get help through this bill. Please check it out. It's a national effort.

<https://www.policylink.org/our-work/community/water-climate>

Rep Stansbury [via chat]: I wonder if we could try to do a policy brainstorm on our next meeting. Have everyone bring challenges and opportunities to the table to discuss and start to develop out our policy portfolio. Would folks be open to that? Even if folks are not policy-oriented per say—it's very helpful to have folks on the ground identify problems, opportunities, challenges!

- Last year we had in-person meetings and broke into workgroups. I know you can set up side meetings through zoom. Maybe we can figure out how to use the technology and break into groups and work on policy issues. If you're not a policy person, no problem. Sometimes the best idea comes from practitioners. It would be great if people could bring their "cocktail ideas" to the table. If I was king/queen for the day, here's what I would do.
- Lilly asked people to invite people to the call, and if they couldn't make it, to bring their ideas to the next meeting in two weeks.

Federal Policies:

- H.R. 6552 EMERGENCY Water is a Human Right. Rep Talb D MI
- FAWA: Federal allocations to the states for water projects
- Main thing is that folks shouldn't have their water turned off. There are ways to get help provided by this bill.
- Check out Policy Link



Next Time: Brainstorming on policies?

- Small group discussions to come up with policy ideas
- Best ideas come from people who are doing the work on the ground
- “If I were king/queen for the day, here’s what I’d do.”



Please contact Sharon Berman at sharon@nmfirst.org if we missed or misunderstood anything in these notes.

Appendix

From: Pam Roy <pam@farmtotablenm.org>
Sent: Wednesday, July 1, 2020 8:29 PM
To: [edited]
Subject: NM Special Session Outcomes, News & Resources

Dear Colleagues:

The **New Mexico Special Session** has ended and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has signed all legislation passed by the New Mexico legislature. On Tuesday, the Governor signed the final appropriations bill HB1, General Appropriations Act and the Governor's Message that provides guidance to all agencies as to budget cuts and redirection of specific priorities of the Governor. As legislators and the Governor had to grapple with an estimated \$2 billion decrease in state revenues over the coming year (beginning July 1st), they balanced the budget with a combination of spending cuts across agencies, funding from reserves, and federal funding from COVID-19 relief programs.

The Governor **vetoed specific cuts** to the early childhood education department of \$5 million and \$8 million to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate instructional materials, and \$5 million to the Opportunity Scholarship Program.

The **New Mexico Food and Agriculture Policy Council (NMFAPC)** focused on Legislative Finance Committee Recommendations (LFC) to legislators that would affect the food, agriculture, and natural resource priorities advocated for by the NMFAPC and partner coalitions. Just prior to the Special Session, the NMFAPC submitted a letter to legislators who had sponsored our priority legislation requesting that they hold programs whole and minimize cuts. We partnered with New Mexico 1st to share our collective priorities with all New Mexico legislators and the Office of the Governor.

Special Session Outcomes:

The majority of the NMFAPC priorities stayed within agency budgets yet will see cuts of four to six percent depending on the agency. The priority agriculture programs administered by the **NM Department of Agriculture**, including support for **farmers' markets** and **local promotion programs**, **Soil and Water Conservation Districts program funds**, and the **healthy soils program**, will be subject to the NMDA four percent cuts. Unfortunately, the **Agriculture and Natural Resources Pilot Fund** of \$1.8 million did not survive the cuts. NM State University faces a four percent cut across all programs. Our priorities to continue funding for the **NM Cooperative Extension Services** and **Experimental Stations** are within the NMSU budget. **NM Grown Fruits and Vegetables for School Meals** appropriation of **\$400,000** and the **Elimination of Co-pays for School Breakfast and Lunch of \$650,000** were maintained in the **NM Public Education Department budget**. They will be subject to the agency percent cuts. This is a relief, as the LFC's recommendations were to cut both programs by 50 percent.



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The new **Kiki Saavedra Senior Dignity Fund** was sanded by \$1 million leaving a balance of \$6.3 million to initiate a wide variety of programs that will benefit seniors across New Mexico. It is our request that the **NM Grown Fruits and Vegetables for Senior Meal Programs** be considered for a modest amount of funding to launch a statewide program, building on the successful pilot program just completed.

The SB 5: Solvency Measures (Capital Outlay Cuts) passed without any vetoes by the Governor. These Capital Outlay funds, for the most part, were funds that had been appropriated prior to the 2020 session and not utilized for project requests in 2018-19.

The NMFAPC looks forward to working with the full NMFAPC and agencies to make sure budget cuts are equitable and no priority programs get cut. Most important is the work ahead of us into 2021 and beyond.

News and Resources:

Mark Your calendars for the **upcoming NMFAPC meeting and special legislative presentation**, “Inside the Legislative Process – Things You’ve Always Wanted to Know”, **July 22nd**. Agenda and material will be sent the week prior to the meeting. **Please RSVP <https://nmfapc.com/meetings/>** and look for upcoming information.

USDA Farm to School Awards Announced – Highlights Exceptional NM Programs: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs>

Congratulations to our colleagues and partners at the NM Public Education Department’s Farm to School Program, Bernalillo Public Schools, the Center for Southwest Culture, and Espanola Public Schools who were all selected as grantees.

The **NM Grown Fruits and Vegetables for Senior Meal Programs Pilot was successfully completed** June 30th, investing \$50,000 in NM grown produce in meals for seniors. The pilot took place in three counties, San Juan, Sandoval, and Socorro in 15 senior centers that provided NM grown fruits and vegetables in more than 102,000 congregate, curbside, and home delivered meals and bagged produce from January - June, even with the challenges of the COVID-19. 15 farmers and farm organizations participated through the organizing of the NM Farmers Marketing Association, Agricultura Network and Farm to Table. The program is administered by the NM Aging and Long-Term Services with support from the NM Departments of Agriculture, Health, and Public Education. We will have further updates in coming weeks. If you are interested in learning more contact Denise King at the ALTSD, Denise.King@state.nm.us and Pam Roy at Farm to Table, pam@farmtotablenm.org.

The **New Mexico Healthy Soil Working Group** has just released their **report on the food and farm economy** of New Mexico. Thank you to the Group for a report and recommendations that will benefit our collective work!
June 17th press release: [---](https://www.nmhealthysoil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Press-release-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

HSWG-06-2020.pdf

Download the study: <http://www.crcworks.org/nmfood20.pdf>

Download the policy recommendations: <https://tinyurl.com/nm-policy-recommendations-2020>

Federal Program Opportunities: see attached

We look forward to our work together and all that is ahead of us.

With much appreciation,

Pam

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Pam Roy

Farm to Table and the

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