

May 21, 1999

SENATE EXECUTIVE MESSAGE NO. 4

The Honorable Manny M. Aragon and

Members of the Senate

Executive-Legislative Building

Santa Fe, New Mexico 87503

Honorable President and Members of the Senate:

I have this day VETOED and am returning SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILLS 6 & 12, as amended, without emergency clause, enacted by the Forty-Fourth Legislature, First Special Session, 1999.

This legislation would have created a 25-member task force to recommend initiatives for public school improvement. Per the New Mexico Constitution and our state statutes, the State Board of Education is the governing authority for all public schools; responsible for developing policy, giving direction, providing control and directing their management. The board with its 15 members, 230 plus employees and annual budget of 15 million dollars appears to me to have sufficient resources and expertise to accomplish everything this task force would attempt.

I continue to maintain that vouchers are the only true reform measure that will dramatically improve student learning. The longer the legislature, the State Board and the rest of the educational establishment delays enactment of a voucher program through diversionary tactics such as this task force, the more of New Mexico's children we will lose to an inadequate and poorly performing public school system.

Sincerely,

Gary E. Johnson

Governor