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For Immediate Release

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## **Environmental Improvement Board Approves Clean Car Program for New Mexico** *New Mexico First Intermountain State to Adopt Pollution-Reducing Initiative*

(Santa Fe, NM) New Mexico became the first Intermountain state to implement the Clean Car program today after the Environmental Improvement Board voted late last night to approve the regulations that address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from cars.

The program, which will become effective Jan. 1, 2008, requires car manufacturers to sell and lease vehicles that meet the standards beginning with model year 2011. The program only applies to new vehicles and will not affect new or used cars sold before that model year.

“The Clean Cars Program is a key part of our state’s effort to reduce global warming emissions to the levels necessary to avoid the worst effects of a warming planet,” said Governor Richardson. “Today’s decision by the Environmental Improvement Board means New Mexico can implement the cleanest standards for vehicle emissions in the country. New Mexico is again taking action, when Washington won’t.”

“New Mexico is taking deliberate steps to protect the environment from the effects of global warming for future generations because the EPA has failed to do so,” Governor Richardson said. “I believe other intermountain states will take New Mexico’s lead and implement the program as well. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from cars and demanding vehicles with a cleaner carbon footprint will help states reverse the effects of global warming – one of the most important issues of our time.”

“The Clean Car standard will help protect our state from the effects of climate change, including public health concerns, increasing temperatures and lessening snow pack and stream flows.” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “Under Governor Richardson’s administration, we will continue to fight to make New Mexico a role model in combating climate change. The Clean Car program is a major step forward that will improve our air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lessen our dependence on foreign oil.”

The program requires reductions in tailpipe emissions to reduce air pollution, overall reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles sold in the state and sales of some Zero Emission Vehicles in the state. The program regulates emissions of non-methane organic gases, carbon monoxide, oxides of nitrogen, particulate matter and greenhouse gases. Greenhouse gases include carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and air conditioning refrigerants. Under the program, consumers will be able to purchase the same cars and light trucks but those vehicles will be manufactured slightly differently to reduce air pollution from the vehicle’s tailpipe and gain greater fuel economy. Studies of the program show that upfront costs for clean cars are more than made up for in fuel efficiency.

"The Clean Car Program now has a foothold across the nation," said Environmental Improvement Board Chairwoman Gay Dillingham. "This is a tremendous opportunity for our country and American manufacturers to take back the lead in environmental protection and innovation reminiscent of the 1970s when Congress passed the Clean Air Act and car production and sales in this nation were at historic highs. I applaud the Governor's visionary leadership on global warming as exemplified by the clean car regulations. From the testimony in this hearing I can say the American people are overwhelmingly asking for this leadership and these regulations."

The Climate Change Advisory Group -- including representatives from various industries, oil and gas companies, utilities, environmentalists, the labs, universities and local governments -- recommended the program as one of the most affordable ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in New Mexico. The Governor then directed the department to present a proposal to adopt the California Clean Car standard to the EIB before the end of the year. The Clean Air Act requires that manufacturers have a two year lead time before implementing the rule. The rule will be effective January 1, 2008 and with the required lead time, will be fully implemented in model year 2011. That model year is the same as calendar year 2010.

Transportation, which accounts for about 17 percent of New Mexico's greenhouse gas emissions, is the third largest and fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions in the state. The EIB, which held a joint hearing for the program that also included Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, also voted to approve the Clean Car program for that city and county, which regulate air quality under the Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board.

In adopting the program, New Mexico joins 11 other states representing more than 35 percent of the American population — about 104 million people and about 78 million potential car buyers. In the Four Corners region, Arizona and Utah are also committed to adopt those standards and Colorado is considering it.

Under Governor Richardson's administration, New Mexico also joined nine states and provinces in the Western Climate Initiative, which commits those states to Clean Cars as part of a collaborative regional effort.

Governor Richardson recently joined 13 governors in calling on automobile manufacturers to produce cars with a cleaner carbon footprint, withdraw legal challenges to clean vehicle standards, and begin working with the states to reverse the threat of global warming. New Mexico was also the first state in the nation to join the Chicago Climate Exchange and the first major energy state to fight climate change.

New Mexico is also a leader among states in addressing climate change. Governor Richardson established tough state greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to reach 2000 levels by the year 2012, 10 percent below 2000 levels by 2020, and 75 percent below 2000 levels by 2050.

Governor Richardson also established the New Mexico Climate Change Advisory Group, a diverse group of 40 stakeholders from industry, environmental groups and local and tribal governments. The group developed 69 greenhouse gas emissions reduction strategies to achieve the Governor's emissions reduction targets. The group unanimously forwarded 67 of the recommendations to the Governor. The state will exceed the Governor's emissions reduction targets when it implements the group's recommendations.

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