



For immediate release  
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## **Governor Bill Richardson Issues Statement on Permanent Closure of Asarco Copper Smelter in El Paso**

### *Decision Means Air Quality in the Region is Protected*

(Santa Fe, N.M.) Governor Richardson and New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry issued the following statements today following the announcement that the Asarco Inc. copper smelter in El Paso will not reopen:

Governor Richardson said:

“I am proud of the role New Mexico has played in keeping our region’s air clean and healthy for local residents,” said Governor Richardson. “This decision to shutter the Asarco El Paso smelter once and for all comes on the same day that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency declared Texas’ permit for the facility invalid and directed environmental regulators in that state to start over.”

Secretary Curry said:

“New Mexico has fought for years to keep this polluting facility closed to protect residents of New Mexico and the surrounding region,” said New Mexico Environment Department Secretary Ron Curry. “We requested this review from EPA because we knew Texas’ permit cut corners that would have led to worsened air quality along New Mexico’s southern border. We could not be more pleased with the result of this action.”

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