



NEWS

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Sum Up the N.M. Governor's Race in One Word? Taxes.

Taxes an increasingly important – and distinguishing – factor in New Mexico's governor's race.

WASHINGTON — The New Mexico governor's race is shaping up as one of the highest-profile contests in the country. And not because both leading candidates, Republican John Sanchez and Democrat Bill Richardson, are Latinos. **It's because differences on tax policy have seldom been so wide.**

Sanchez, a New Mexico state legislator and former business owner, has called for income tax relief and significant tax reform to create jobs and make New Mexico more attractive to business. Richardson, a former congressman and Clinton cabinet official, has also proposed an income tax cut and a special legislative session to review the state's tax code.

But while both are campaigning on tax relief for New Mexican families, their records speak worlds of differences. As a state legislator, Sanchez supported Republican Gov. Gary Johnson's income tax cut and proposed several pro-job bills of his own. **Richardson's congressional voting record** however, especially the deciding vote he cast for a 1993 budget bill containing some \$250 billion in tax increases, **has led some to question his credibility on the issue.**

"It seems a little disingenuous for someone with a tax-and-spend record like Bill Richardson to suddenly come out in favor of tax relief for small business," said taxpayer advocate Grover Norquist, who heads Americans for Tax Reform (ATR) in Washington. **"You can't expect taxpayers in New Mexico to just forget 20 years of tax hikes and big government spending."**

Most importantly, Sanchez has taken the Taxpayer Protection Pledge, sponsored by ATR, which is a promise to New Mexico Taxpayers to **"oppose and veto any and all efforts to increase taxes."** President George W. Bush, 249 Congressmen and eight governors, including Gary Johnson, have signed the Pledge.

Richardson campaigned with Bill Clinton in 1992 on a promise to cut middle-class taxes. But after he was elected, his enthusiasm waned. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reports that Richardson opposed their pro-job agenda two-thirds of the time. **And the Nation Federation of Independent Businesses gave Richardson a failing grade on small-business issues every year he was in Congress.**

"On taxes, New Mexico voters should ask themselves: Who signed the Pledge?" continued Norquist. **"By pledging 'no new taxes,' Sanchez sided with taxpayers against tax hikes. When will Richardson do the same?"**

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who support tax simplification and oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org