

**State of New Mexico**  
**House of Representatives**  
Ben Lujan, Speaker of the House  
Ken Martinez, House Majority Leader  
Sheryl Williams Stapleton, House Majority Whip

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Rep. Stewart's Bill to Shore Up the State's Unemployment Fund  
Unanimously Passes HCPAC**

**Santa Fe, NM** – With increasing numbers of New Mexicans unemployed and an unemployment fund in jeopardy, Rep. Mimi Stewart (D-Albuquerque) in conjunction with Governor Susana Martinez and the Workforce Solutions Department Secretary Designee, Celina Bussey, is working to shore up the state's unemployment fund. She is sponsoring legislation, HB59cs, that would both increase employer contribution to the fund and reduce expenses on the benefits side in order to make the fund solvent. The bill passed the House Consumer and Public Affairs Committee today with a vote of 5-0.

Rep. Stewart said, "The money from this fund is important to the day-to-day lives of so many New Mexican families and it is imperative that it remain solvent. This measure will shore up the fund while preventing a deficit which would then require even greater contributions by employers. Sacrifices on both sides of the spectrum have to be made in order to make the fund financially sound." She added, "I appreciate the input I've received from Governor Martinez and Secretary-Designee Bussey on this critical matter."

House Bill 59cs would increase employer contributions from Schedule 1 to Schedule 3 on January 1, 2012 and it would also reduce expenses. Expense reductions would come from reforms that have been made in previous years. They include: full-time students; reduce dependent allowance from 4 to 2; and discontinuance of EB/HUP (Extended Benefits/High Unemployment Period) extensions contingent of 100% federal funding on July 1, 2011. Modernization reforms that were made in previous legislation that garnered federal money sponsored by Rep. Stewart will remain intact as a good-faith effort.

Beverlee McClure, President and CEO of the Association of Commerce and Industry, and Jeff Parker, Regional Vice President for Manpower (a global employment services agency) and Chairman of Albuquerque Economic Development spoke in support of the bill. McClure called it "the best of a worst-case scenario."

House Bill 59cs now heads to the House Judiciary Committee for consideration.