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STATEMENT

**New Mexico's Early Childhood
Programs Remain Unfunded**

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – Wednesday, May 03, 2017— IMMEDIATE RELEASE— This is a sad day for the future of New Mexico's young children. Early childhood programs remain unfunded.

We congratulate Santa Fe for elevating the issue of child well-being to the forefront and thank proponents for their earnest work. The May 2, 2017 vote on the "Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Tax" has brought New Mexico's startling statistics to the public square. We are currently ranked 49th in child well-being, number one in the highest number of children living in poverty and have the second highest rate of children living in hunger in the USA. This effort is so critical and we encourage the City of Santa Fe to continue to seek remedies and solutions for funding early childhood programs because the unmet need for these State programs continues to be \$406 million.

We take the opposition at their word for "finding a better way". For seven years, a proposal has been made to New Mexico's state legislators to fund early childhood programs from the Land Grant Permanent Fund, which is not a tax. This proposal is a call for New Mexico's senators to vote for the passage of the Constitutional Amendment for early childhood education. Contact: Allen Sanchez 505.319.3334—END