

January 30, 2008

15-Day Letter

The start of this session was somber due to the unexpected passing of Senator Ben D. Altamirano, Senate President Pro Tempore. Senator Altamirano's gentle demeanor, 37 years as a state senator and infinite wisdom are deeply missed. The tenor in the Senate continues to be that of when a close loved one is no longer present; you know their spirit is there, but there is still emptiness in the heart.

There are a few changes this session that will eventually develop into a more efficient way of doing business. One change is the pre-filing of legislation. That means a bill, resolution or memorial can be prepared before the session, filed and then be immediately ready for the legislative process at the start of the session. Another change involves limiting the number of bills that can be introduced in both chambers and allowing Senators and Representatives to sign onto bills introduced in the other chamber.

The major issues for me this year are crafting a budget that addresses government responsibilities like health care and education; preparing capital outlay packages that fund new projects like the Behavioral Health Institute (BHI) long-term care facility, the Regional State Police Headquarters, the warm water fish hatchery, rearing station and educational center, various New Mexico Highlands University infrastructure projects and the student services center, the Multi-Purpose Center at Luna Community College and the Claunch-Pinto Soil and Water Conservation District facility in Mountainair. The major responsibility this session is to pass a responsible budget that funds our state's basic needs.

I was also fortunate to be named president of Luna Community College on January 15, 2008 – opening day of this session. Although I do not intend to formally take the position until July, I have already been meeting with trustees, faculty, staff and students and have set a schedule that will allow me to review policies, meet with prospective students within the service area, transition into the position and hit the ground running.

I wouldn't have changed my life in anyway to get where I am at today. My background is diversified and I enjoy multi-tasking. My advice to young people—and please help me pass this along—is: study hard, give life your best, be disciplined and responsible, experience different job opportunities while in school and practice positive values and morals. Overall, you may be criticized, but you will have a strong base, good reputation and can move forward to enjoy a good career and be proud of who you become.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your state senator. I am now number 8 in seniority and consider this honor you have bestowed upon me to be the highest level of public trust possible. May you and your family enjoy good health, life's positive moments, career highs and prosperity never before imagined.

Siempre,

Pete Campos