

# A road map for moving forward - \_EX: Sen. Pete Campos lays out a blueprint for make NM first

By Associated Press

Sunday, January 6th, 2019 at 12:02am

\_copyright">By Sen. Pete Campos

Today's youth are anxious to complete an educational degree, jump-start their careers and begin earning good wages. As a significant multicultural population, we all have high hopes that our way of life can be successfully and meaningfully passed on to our families. To do this, a deep understanding of our majestic landscapes, life with scarce water sources, foods, art, music, lowrider and motorcycle clubs, life in small communities, farms, ranches and unique personal experiences is essential. Once our way of life is fully integrated and each person is recognized for our purpose – regardless where we choose to live – then the state's collage of talents, products and services will "operate as one," and we will rise to the top of the country's good lists.

Yes, we have already made great progress, but new administrations come in with invaluable input from constituents and set their compass direction accordingly. While immediate strides will be made during the 2019 60-day legislative session, a much deeper and broader view will ensue as a result of the session's outcome.

This will not be easy, and it will take the next three years to establish the platform for long-term success. This first year, we will take a full inventory of our resources; the second year, we will prioritize our needs with available funds; and by the third year, our vision and initiatives will have been vetted and rolled out. Then, in the fourth year and beyond, how we have prepared for our future will be measured by our outreach and outcomes, global competitiveness, and the vitality of our health, educational and economic services.

Making New Mexico first takes all of us working together! There is room to respect each other's differences, but there is no room for lopsided program and infrastructure improvements. For example: while we have an oil boom in southeastern New Mexico with one of the largest – if not the largest – oil reserves in the world and an unprecedented enthusiasm for filmmaking in central New Mexico, we have infrastructure and unintended consequences that come with this quick growth. A balanced energy road map is another essential component of any plan moving forward. We also have needs across the state, from acequia users in northern New Mexico to farmers in southeastern New Mexico and in small communities in every corner of New Mexico.

Wise planning, not jumping to conclusions without evidence, and data analytics, will be the template that leads us to our destiny and funds the needs of struggling first-time parents, veterans, the elderly and the homeless. When we extend a helping hand to others, we all prosper!

It is important that we all participate in the future of New Mexico's development. Each of us has a short time to make a difference in our lives, the lives of those we love and the lives of our neighbors. Let's learn from our past, keep open communication and invest in the well-being of our children. When we do this together, children laugh and are encouraged to seek an education; the disabled carry happiness in their hearts because they too are important; those leaving our prisons are given another chance to find jobs and raise their families; the person tormented by addiction can get help to overcome a devastating mental and physical fixation, and return to their families whole again; and our aging grandparents and parents smile peacefully knowing they will be well cared for and will not be lonely. Our veterans and active-duty service members also know that their service and sacrifice will never be forgotten.

The array of needs is enormous, the resources – while seemingly abundant – are finite and our human potential are priceless. When you really think about this combination, the thought stands out that we can find solutions to our problems, rise to the challenges that confront each generation, and look deep within ourselves to know that we have great potential when we seek out and meld our talents to leave our state better than we found it.

In the days to come, let's strengthen our bond, work in unison and craft legislation that makes sense for the needs of those depending for their livelihoods on our vast public lands, while respecting the lifestyles of those using those same lands for personal health and outdoor enjoyment. It can happen if we hope, reach out, serve and communicate with one another.

*Campos, D-Las Vegas, is a Democratic state senator whose district includes parts of Colfax, Guadalupe, Harding, Mora, Quay, San Miguel and Taos counties.*

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