

## Martinez signs two budget bills from special session

Written by By Matthew Reichbach NM Political Report  
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SANTA FE – Gov. Susana Martinez signed two budget bills that the Legislature passed during the recent, contentious special session.

One of those bills will move money from various funds to the general fund to pay for the budget deficit for both the fiscal year that ended in June and the current fiscal year. The bulk of that money comes from the tobacco settlement permanent fund.

Martinez signed the bill without any line-item vetoes.

The other bill deals with tax credits. Among other things, the bill closes a loophole on the high-wage tax credit and restricts the health care practitioners deduction to only health care practitioners and not hospitals. The intention of the deduction was for only health care practitioners, but the wording made it available to hospitals as well.

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Martinez did make one line-item veto on this bill. The House amended the bill to put \$1.5 million to the Children, Youth and Families Department's home visiting services to help prevent child abuse. Martinez said the language "is too narrowly drafted as it excludes all child abuse prevention initiatives except home visiting services" and so struck the language "to support home visiting services."

Martinez already signed two bills passed during the special session, neither of which were particularly controversial. One authorized the use of \$25 million in severance tax bonds for school instructional material and transportation costs, while the other temporarily stopped sending money from the state's general fund to two other areas of the state's budget.

Bills dealing with budget cuts and reverting funds for infrastructure projects that never began to pay down the deficit are still pending. Martinez also has not acted on the feed bill, which would pay for the costs associated with the legislative session.

Martinez has until next Wednesday to act on these bills. If she does not, they will be pocket vetoed.

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