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Our local Senator George Munoz made it clear last year that our myriad of local vagrancy, alcohol and poverty problems, which have only become worse after decades of the same progressive statist approach, should not be a "blame game"but should be about solutions.

His solution is to keep the status quo. The voters of New Mexico spoke in November sending the clear message they are fed up with democrat solutions, which keep our state economically trailing our neighboring states as well as nationally. Yet, Munoz and his fellow senate democrats insist on economy killing tax hikes to finance capital outlay funding thus obstructing passage of the bill.

That may be just as well though considering New Mexico appears to be the only state that allows lawmakers to divide a set amount of money in a method often known as "pork-barrel politics." Rather than tax hikes or borrowing money for "public investment" projects, policy-makers now have an opportunity to turn their attention back to tax reform, deregulation and a right-to-work law – cost free and proven economic development measures in line with the Economic Freedom Index.

The Economic Freedom Index measures the fundamental right of every human to control his or her own labor and property based on the number and intensity of government regulations on wealth-creating activity. The EFI is a valuable tool for entrepreneurs and businesses seeking to establish or relocate.

It is no coincidence that regions with lowest EFI ratings such as Cuba, Venezuela, Greece, Italy, North Korea, China, Russia, Africa and the Middle East have dreadful economies, extreme poverty and massive social problems. Our own dismal ranking in McKinley County provides little incentive for businesses to establish or relocate here.

George Munoz and his grumbling union flunkies had no knowledge whatsoever of the EFI at a

city meeting in February and showed little interest in exploring its merits. Rather than address our region's constraints of economic liberties as Governor Martinez is doing for New Mexico, our local elected officials choose to maintain the status quo, rejecting conservative reforms to taxation, property rights, welfare, government regulation and right-to-work legislation, as well as needed assurances of availability of traditional energy production, all of which keep our EFI rating at the bottom 1% for the North American continent.

It's as if they are content to keep us mired in poverty, social disorder and despair while propping up their own interests as well as their bureaucratic buddies and affluent crony unions in Chicago.

There will be no solutions in Gallup until we see major changes in our politically correct establishment of elected officials, government bureaucracy, media and academia – the blame is on them. Progressive statism has failed Gallup just as it has failed around the world throughout history. It is time for free market solutions.

Google search "economic freedom index Fraser Heritage Cato" for more information.