

PETE V. DOMENICI
NEW MEXICO
(RET.)



United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C.

January 14, 2016

Governor Susana Martinez
New Mexico State Capitol
490 Old Santa Fe Trail, Room 400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Governor Martinez:

We are writing to request your assistance with legislation of great importance.

In 2015, a bipartisan bill to make "assisted outpatient treatment" (AOT) an option for New Mexicans with severe mental illness (SB 53) was introduced by Sen. Mary Kay Papen and Rep. Paul Pacheco. In a major breakthrough after many years of paralysis on this issue, both houses overwhelmingly passed versions of the bill. Unfortunately, time constraints on the final day of session made it impossible to reconcile the technical differences and send up a unified bill for your signature.

We believe AOT is an essential tool in helping certain individuals with severe mental illness live safely in the community, and we lament that New Mexico is one of only five states without such a law. We relate very personally to the many New Mexico families who spoke in support of SB 53 about their struggles to secure treatment for mentally ill loved ones. The effectiveness of AOT in improving outcomes for the most challenging patients has been widely recognized. Just last month, Congress appropriated \$15 million for 2016 to support the creation of local AOT programs across the United States. New Mexico jurisdictions cannot compete for this funding until AOT is authorized by state law.

For these reasons, we would be most grateful if you would issue a Governor's Message calling for AOT legislation to be re-introduced in the 2016 session. Please help us build on the momentum achieved in 2015 towards this long-elusive goal.

Thank you for considering this request. We wish you great success with your own legislative priorities in the upcoming 30-day session.

Fondly,

Handwritten signatures of Pete and Nancy Domenici in blue ink. The signature of Pete Domenici is on the left, and the signature of Nancy Domenici is on the right.
Pete and Nancy Domenici

cc: Rep. Don Tripp, Speaker of the House
Rep. Nate Gentry, Majority Floor Leader
Sen. Michael Sanchez, Majority Floor Leader
Sen. Mary Kay Papen, President Pro Tempore
Rep. Paul Pacheco