



March 24, 2014

Contact Person:

Kate O'Donnell, VIDA in Healthcare  
[vidainhealthcare@gmail.com](mailto:vidainhealthcare@gmail.com) or 505-886-1391

## ***Juntos para la Salud Urges Bernalillo County Commissioners to Reconsider Use of \$90 Million in Property Taxes to UNMH on March 25***

Albuquerque, NM— This Tuesday evening, March 25, the Bernalillo County Commission has a one-in-eight-years chance to open the lease agreement with UNM Hospital and reconsider the use of \$90 million yearly in property taxes provided to UNM Hospital (UNMH) for its lease and operations. *Juntos para la Salud/Together for Health*, a coalition of individuals and more than 30 groups formed to address the needs of Bernalillo County's underinsured and uninsured, is urging Bernalillo County commissioners to support a resolution on Tuesday's agenda to re-open the lease agreement and establish a task force of community members to begin a community conversation on how funds can best meet healthcare needs.

"60,000 residents will remain without health care coverage despite the opportunities provided through Medicaid expansion and the New Mexico Health Insurance Exchange," said Kate O'Donnell, a member of the *Together* campaign committee. "Our vision is for a county health safety net that assures affordable healthcare at UNM Hospital and community clinics for all uninsured and underinsured residents living under 250% of the federal poverty level in Bernalillo County and requires that UNM Hospital make no referral to collections for indigent patients. Community members must be part of planning, assessment and decision-making to ensure a strong safety net and solve the county's health coverage opportunity gap."

The Bernalillo County Commission will meet at 5:00 p.m. on March 25 at One Civic Plaza NW in Albuquerque. *Together* members will attend to advocate for re-opening the UNMH lease agreement.

For additional information on the *Together* campaign, please contact Kate O'Donnell at 505-886-1391.

*Juntos para la Salud / Together for Health* campaign supporters (*in progress*) include ABQ Center for Peace & Justice, ACCESS, Agri-Cultura Network, American Federation of Teachers NM Retirees, Bernalillo County Place Matters, Casa de Salud, Centro Savila, Central NM Labor Council, Committee of Interns and Residents - SEIU / Healthcare, Communication Workers of America Local 7076, District 1199 NM, National Union of Hospital & Healthcare Employees, East Central Ministries (One Hope Centro de Vida), EleValle, South Valley Healthy Communities Collaborative, Encuentro, Gray Panthers of Greater Albuquerque, Health Action NM, La Mesa Presbyterian Church, La Plazita Institute, Network of Health Professionals for a National Health Program, NM Chapter of Physicians for a National Health Program, NM Alliance for Retired Americans, NM Center on Law & Poverty, NM Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, NM Health Equity Working Group, NM Forum for Youth in Community, NM Immigrant Law Center, NM Voices for Children, Partnership for Community Action, Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, Southwest Women's Law Center, Strong Families NM, Transgender Resource Center of NM, UNM Community Engagement Center, VIDA in Healthcare, YDI – Elev8 NM, and Young Women United.

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