



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 10, 2013**

**Contact: Enrique Knell**  
**(505) 819-1398**  
[enrique.knell@state.nm.us](mailto:enrique.knell@state.nm.us)

## **Governor Susana Martinez Launches Heroes to Highways Program to Help Returning Veterans**

*Governor's Program Eases Transition to Civilian Workforce for Qualified Veterans*

**Santa Fe** — Governor Susana Martinez says the new Heroes to Highways Program, helping returning veterans obtain New Mexico commercial driver's licenses (CDLs) more easily, will officially start tomorrow, Wednesday December 11. Heroes to Highways will recognize military transportation credentials to help veterans, as well as Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve personnel, obtain employment in the civilian workforce. Qualified applicants will need only to take the CDL knowledge exam to be issued a CDL.

"Our military veterans receive the best training in the world, including safely operating heavy military vehicles under extreme conditions," said Governor Martinez. "We need to recognize these skills by removing redundant and unnecessary requirements that can deny our veterans job opportunities."

For qualified veterans and National Guard and Reserve members in New Mexico, the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) will expedite their path into commercial driver jobs. New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD) Secretary Demesia Padilla described how the department will administer the program, saying, "We will ensure that our veterans will receive their CDLs in a timely and expeditious manner as we welcome them back into our communities. This is our way of saying, 'Thank You' to all our returning veterans for their service to our country." New Mexico Department of Veterans' Services Secretary Timothy Hale praised the program, saying, "This is a win not only for veterans, but also for the entire state of New Mexico. Veterans will be able to transition more quickly into civilian life, and employers will be able to fill more critical transportation jobs with highly-trained and experienced employees."

MVD also worked with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to obtain exemptions to facilitate the implementation of Heroes to Highways. The Heroes To Highways Program also creates a path for veterans and National Guard and Reserve members to explore obtaining a CDL driver position by: validating specific applicant experience through the Training/Validation offices at military installations in New



Mexico, processing and issuing CDLs through MVD's mobile customer service centers, and working with the New Mexico Trucking Association to facilitate a connection with commercial carriers and prospective employees qualified through the program.

In addition to Heroes to Highways, Governor Susana Martinez has introduced several other programs to help veterans more easily transition to the civilian workforce, such as Operation Soundstage, which trains veterans for entry-level positions in the television and film industry, and a pilot program to train veterans as wild land firefighters. Governor Martinez also signed legislation to help expedite professional licenses for active duty military, veterans, and their spouses.

###