



New Mexico Senate
Finance Committee
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Greetings Chairman Munoz and Honorable Members,

My name is Jesus Villarreal and I am President of TRIO New Mexico. I urge you to support S.B. 140, the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship Act.

State-funded college tuition programs like the Opportunity Scholarship are game-changers for our students and communities. As a TRIO Programs manager, I have seen the positive impact of free post-secondary education in students of low-income families. SB 140 will provide another avenue for students to achieve their dream of earning a college degree.

The passage of S.B. 140 will provide access to tuition-free college for up to 35,000 New Mexicans who will benefit from the comprehensive financial aid package covering tuition and fees starting in Fall 2022. The goal is simple: whether you are a recent high school graduate, a veteran, someone who lost the Lottery Scholarship, or a New Mexican looking to advance your education while working part time or full time, you can go to college tuition free.

Every New Mexican deserves the opportunity to reach higher and pursue education or career training leading to a brighter future for New Mexico. Tens of thousands of New Mexicans have already benefited from free college under the New Mexico Opportunity and Lottery scholarships, and we are working as a state to break down any financial barrier to accessing higher education.

By investing in the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship, you can help up thousands of New Mexicans make the dream of a college degree a reality, and bring additional revenue to our state via their contributions as taxpayers and savings to public assistance programs.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to helping New Mexico's students. I appreciate your time and consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Jesus Villarreal

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jesus Villarreal". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

TRIO New Mexico President