

From: Webster, Melinda
Sent time: Thursday, October 20, 2011 3:49:59 AM
To: Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) <Cari@excelined.org>
Subject: RE: The New Mexican: Radio spots blast Martinez administration

wow...thanks for sharing. What was the name of that site you mentioned at lunch the other day that was free and monitors national education news? something landscape?

Thanks,
Melinda

From: Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org) [mailto:Cari@excelined.org]
Sent: Wed 10/19/2011 12:11 PM
To: Webster, Melinda
Subject: FW: The New Mexican: Radio spots blast Martinez administration

FYI~

From: Nadia Hagberg (Nadia@excelined.org)
Sent: Wednesday, October 19, 2011 8:39 AM
To: Mandy Clark (mandy@excelined.org); Jaryn Emhof (jaryn@excelined.org)
Cc: Patricia Levesque (patricia@excelined.org); Mary Laura Bragg (MaryLaura@excelined.org); Matthew Ladner (ladner55@gmail.com); Christy Hovanetz (christyh@excelined.org); Alexis Franz (Alexis@excelined.org); Cari Miller (Cari@excelined.org); Deirdre Finn (dfinn@excelined.org)
Subject: The New Mexican: Radio spots blast Martinez administration

Radio spots blast Martinez administration

Ads target governor's moves in hiring, education

Steve Terrell | The New Mexican
Posted: Tuesday, October 18, 2011

A liberal political action committee headed by a private investigator who frequently works as an "opposition-research" man on Democratic Party campaigns is running radio ads critical of Gov. Susana Martinez's administration.

Michael Corwin of the Independent Source PAC said the ads began running on two Albuquerque stations, KRST and KMGA. He said the ads soon will run on KBAC and KTRC in Santa Fe as well.

One 30-second spot concerns the state Public Education Department's hiring of the wife of Martinez's chief of staff, Keith Gardner, for an administrative position. The ad claims the administration changed the requirements for the job in order to help Stephanie Gardner get the job.

Another 30-second ad tackles an alleged conflict of interest on the State Personnel Board.

Paul Yarbrough, the chairman of the board, is a vice president of an Albuquerque law firm that has state contracts amounting to more than \$500,000. Though the Butt, Thornton and Baehr firm does handle employment cases involving state employees, Yarbrough's area of practice does not include employment litigation.

The third ad is a 60-second spot blasting Public Education Department Secretary Hanna Skandera for overturning the Public Education Commission's decision to decertify three troubled charter schools earlier this year.

After that decision, the department contracted with a law firm that represents charter schools. Skandera then hired Patty Matthews, a lawyer from that firm, to head the department's division that regulates charter schools — which the ad says is like a "fox guarding the hen house." The administration has said Matthews no longer has any financial interest in charter schools.

Asked for comment on Independent Source PAC's ads, Martinez spokesman Scott Darnell said, "At this point, no, we're not going to comment on these ads, which appear to be backed by a shadow group intent on opposing education reform and defending the status quo in New Mexico's education system, which has failed to adequately prepare our kids to read and learn."

Corwin declined to say how much Independent Source PAC was paying to produce and air the spots. He said that information would be available in the next financial report the committee has to file. That report is not due for about six months.

Independent Source PAC's first financial report, filed last week with the Secretary of State's Office, shows the group raised just more than \$500 during the previous three months and had about \$170 in the bank at the end of September.

Corwin said the committee recently hired a fundraiser.

He said he and others involved have been working for free on the committee's various investigations.

"In doing this I knew that no one would fund this until we had product to show," he said in an email. "So everything was done sweat equity — labor intensive but not money intensive — until we had some real tangible stuff to show the funders. The money has started to flow since the end of last quarter. That's how we can afford some radio."