

1. Your name and district number:

Doreen Gallegos, District 52

2. The overall goals of welfare reform are to move people from welfare to work, reduce the incidence of teen pregnancy and encourage healthy marriages and family formation. TANF allows funds to be spent for marriage and couple relationship education, responsible fatherhood programs, financial education, and parenting programs. What benefits do you see for allocating 1-2% of the TANF budget in New Mexico for services to strengthen families?

I believe that allocating 1-2% of the TANF budget for services to strengthen families is essential. These monies would be well spent because they will be providing direct services to the most vulnerable New Mexicans.

3. Research has consistently shown that the social, educational, health and economic outcomes of children in healthy, two-parent families are better than those living in single-parent households. New Mexico has among the highest rates in the nation for teen pregnancies, school drop-outs, juvenile crimes and women and children living in poverty. New Mexico spends \$225 million every year dealing with the outcomes of families in crisis. If you are elected, what would you do to strengthen families?

I would look at what type of educational services are being provided. Family planning services are vital. Women and girls in New Mexico need to have access to information and the tools to empower them.

4. The percentage of children in poverty in New Mexico is 26% higher than the national average. There are many factors contributing to this phenomenon including the fact that 45% of infants in New Mexico are born to teen parents. If you are elected, how would you reduce the number of teen pregnancies in New Mexico?

In 2008, contraceptive services provided at publicly funded centers in NM helped women avoid 15,100 unintended pregnancies. Without these type of services the number of teen pregnancies in NM would be 75% higher, I would support legislation that would continue to give aide for these type of services.

5. Studies show that couple relationship education (e.g., conflict resolution, communication skills, understanding of gender differences, etc.) results in happier and healthier marriages. What programs and services are available to couples and families in your district?

There are limited services in my district, which is concerning to me. My district also includes rural areas of Anthony, Vado and Berino and many of my constituents have problems gaining access to limited programs.

6. How can the NM Coalition for Healthy Families help you strengthen families in New Mexico?

Continue to educate, advocate and provide services for New Mexico families.

7. Do you have any additional ideas or comments regarding New Mexico's families?

I would like to work at initiatives that will empower and educate families, which includes expansion of programs that provide direct services.