

SANTA FE NEW MEXICAN

Gov. Martinez praised for limiting government spending, stopping tax hikes

October 9th, 2018

Days to the election: 27

High marks for governor: New Mexico, namely its governor, gets a top grade for once.

When it comes to reducing government spending and keeping state tax rates in check, Gov. Susana Martinez is No. 1, according to the conservative Cato Institute.

The two-term Republican received the highest score on the organization's latest Fiscal Policy Report Card. It gave her high marks for vetoing one tax increase after another while cutting corporate tax rates and signing budgets that have remained roughly flat.

Yes, this has also coincided with an anemic recovery from the recession and comes after a state district judge says funding for public education is unconstitutionally inadequate. Meanwhile, broader tax reform remains elusive.

But Martinez has held up a projected surplus as big as \$1.2 billion as effectively vindicating her long-running opposition to tax increases at the state level.

Only four other governors got an "A" grade: Henry McMaster of South Carolina, Doug Burgum of North Dakota, Paul LePage of Maine and Greg Abbott of Texas.

Eight governors got "F" grades: Roy Cooper of North Carolina, John Bel Edwards of Louisiana, Tom Wolf of Pennsylvania, Jim Justice of West Virginia, David Ige of Hawaii, Dennis Daugaard of South Dakota, Kate Brown of Oregon and Jay Inslee of Washington.