

To: Board of Directors, New Mexico Spaceport Authority
From: Rick Homans, Executive Director
Date: January 5, 2011
Re: Resignation

First, let me start by thanking each of you on the Board for your commitment to the NMSA and the Spaceport Authority. I have valued the many years that we have worked together. I particularly want to thank Ben Woods, who has served as Chairman for the last six months. We have all benefited from his steady hand and his reasoned approach to complex issues.

My heartfelt appreciation also goes to the staff, and key contractors, of the NMSA. Without exception, they are committed to the success of this project and the potential it has to transform the economy of southern New Mexico. I have continually relied on them for support and advice. It is remarkable that such a small number of people can have accomplished so much – Spaceport America is coming true because of their hard work.

I returned to the NMSA, as the fulltime Executive Director, in July. I made the personal commitment to lead the project through to the first commercial flight, the day that Richard Branson and his family will fly to space from Spaceport America. I realized that the work ahead would be intense, with many difficult hurdles to overcome. The project, at the time, faced serious difficulties on a number of fronts. But few people ever have the opportunity to be involved in such a transformational project as Spaceport America. And so I embraced the project and have loved every minute of it. I am grateful to have had the opportunity.

While I have embraced this project, it is clear that Governor Martinez is not embracing me. I understand politics, and I also understand how critical it is for her to have absolute trust and confidence in the executive leadership of the NMSA. That is a Governor's prerogative and it is necessary for Spaceport America to succeed.

As of January 1, the Martinez Administration owns Spaceport America and all of its potential. The change that is taking place today is all part of taking ownership, and preparing for the challenges and heavy-lifting that lies ahead.

Now that we have the spaceport nearly built, the harder work begins -- we have to attract the customers, the operators, the manufacturers, suppliers and the R & D. We have to turn Spaceport America, and the surrounding communities, into a major visitor destination. We have to **BE** the leader of this new commercial spaceflight industry. All this is possible, but only if the Governor leads the way. She has to believe in the project and its massive potential to create jobs and impact education. She has to become its biggest champion and rally her Administration to support this effort. There is no middle ground – nothing short of complete commitment from Governor Martinez and her Administration will allow this project to achieve its full potential, which is the promise we made to the citizens of New Mexico, and particularly the citizens of Dona Ana and Sierra counties who taxed themselves to make Spaceport America happen.

My hope is that Governor Martinez can quickly move beyond viewing Spaceport America as the legacy project of Bill Richardson – the very best thing that can happen is for Governor Martinez to embrace this project as her own legacy. She will be the Governor who opens the first, purpose-built commercial spaceport in the world – and the world will be watching.

On December 30, the Martinez Administration ordered me to resign, or be terminated. I informed the Administration that the responsibility to hire and fire the Executive Director rests, by law, with the Board and that I would take up the issue with the Board at the Emergency Meeting we have convened today.

And so, at the request of Governor Martinez, I am submitting my resignation as Executive Director of the New Mexico Spaceport Authority, effective at close of business January 7th, 2011.

It has been a privilege to serve, and I wish all of you the greatest success as you take this project onward and upward.