

2021 SOUTHWEST NEW MEXICO

Legislative Guide



**SENATE
ROSTER**

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**REPRESENTATIVE
ROSTER**

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Bulletin

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This year's Legislature will feature new looks in almost every sense



New Mexico has the last of America's true citizen legislators, men and women from all corners of our state who don't earn a salary to serve their constituencies.

These elected officials have met every year since 1912, but in 2021, they will conduct the people's business in a way they never have.

The global pandemic has changed the way almost everything is done, and the legislative session is no different. Even at our presstime, it was

not certain how the legislature would operate, but most expected a hybrid form of in-person and online meetings.

Necessity is the mother of invention, however, and the creativity and ingenuity of our senators and representatives will almost certainly carry the day. There will be some stumbles, and some instances of on-the-spot changes and pivots to improve connections or operations.

Even without the effects of Covid-19, this Legislature was going to look different.

Many longtime senators were unseated in the primary elections, including longtimers Sen. Mary Kay Papen, the president pro tem, and Sen. John Arthur Smith, the chair of the Legislative Finance Committee.

In the House, for the first time ever, the majority of the representatives are women.

More and more, New Mexico's elected officials are representing the diversity that is the Land of Enchantment.

It will be a difficult session logistically. And there will be the usual difficult debates on disputed issues and legislations.

But the business of the people of New Mexico will be conducted.

RICHARD COLTHARP

Publisher, Las Cruces Bulletin

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About the New Mexico Legislature

The New Mexico Legislature convenes Jan. 19, 2021 for the first session of the state's 55th legislature.

The legislature includes a 42-member Senate, which has 27 Democrats and 15 Republicans, and a 70-member House, which has 44 Democrats, 25 Republicans and one independent. Brittney A. Barreras was elected to represent District 12 in Bernalillo County as declined-to-state a party preference. She is the legislature's second independent. Former state Rep. Andy Nuñez, who is the current mayor of Hatch, served District 36 (Doña Ana County) as a Democrat, Independent and Republican, 2001-12 and 14-16. (There are 7,383 state legislative seats among the 50 states. That includes 1,972 senators, of whom 1,069 are Republicans, 849 are Democrats and 54 are others; and 5,411 representatives, of whom 2,930 are Republicans, 2,450 are Democrats and 31 are other. Nebraska has 49 nonpartisan senators in a bicameral legislature. There are an additional 192 legislative seats in the District of Columbia, American Samoa, Guam, Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.)

There are no term limits for New Mexico legislators. Sen. Stuart Ingle, R-Chaves,

Curry, De Baca, Lea and Roosevelt, was elected in 1984 and is the legislature's senior member.

Each House member represents about 26,000 residents; each senator represents about 43,300 residents. Legislators are unpaid but receive a per diem allowance for each day of legislative service.

The legislature meets each year, holding 60-day sessions in odd-numbered years and 30-day sessions in even-numbered years. The 60-day sessions have an open call, meaning legislators can introduce whatever bills they wish. The 30-day sessions are restricted to the governor's call and budget issues.

The lieutenant governor presides over the Senate. In the absence of the lieutenant governor, the president pro-tempore presides. The speaker of the House presides in that body.

The New Mexico House currently has 14 standing committees; the Senate has 9. The legislature has 25 interim committees called committees, subcommittees, councils and task forces.

Since the first legislature was seated in 1912, Republicans have controlled the New Mexico House 1912-22, 1927-30, 1953-54 and 2015-16. A coalition of Republicans

and conservative Democrats controlled the House 1979-82 and 1985-86. Democrats have controlled the House 1923-26, 1931-52, 1955-1978, 1983-84, 1987-2014 and since 2017. Republicans controlled the state Senate 1912-30. A coalition of 4 Democrats and 21 Republicans controlled the Senate in 1985 until one of the Democrats switched parties in late 1985, giving the Republicans outright control through 1986. A coalition of 3 Republicans and 21 Democrats controlled the Senate in 1987. A coalition of 5 Republicans and 18 Democrats controlled the Senate in 1988. A coalition of 3 Democrats and 18 Republicans controlled the Senate 2001-02. A coalition of 8 Democrats and 15 Republicans controlled the Senate 2009-12. Democrats have controlled the Senate 1933-84, 1989-2000, 2003-08 and since 2013.

In New Mexico, only the governor has the authority to call a special session of the legislature.

State legislative districts and New Mexico's three U.S. congressional districts will be redrawn by the legislature following the completion of the 2020 census. Visit <https://www.nmlegis.gov/Redistricting/>.

Visit www.nmlegis.gov.

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How to Pass a Bill

1. INTRODUCTION AND COMMITTEE REFERRAL

A bill may be introduced in the House of Representatives or in the Senate. It is assigned a number, read twice by title, ordered, printed and referred to the proper committee.

2. COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Committee meetings are usually open to the public. A bill may receive one of the following recommendations:

- Do pass
- Do pass as amended
- Do not pass
- Without recommendation
- Without recommendation as amended

3. ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE REPORT

Reports of committees are subject to adoption by the full House and Senate. When a favorable committee report is adopted, the bill is placed on the calendar, which is the list of bills scheduled for third reading and possible final passage.

4. THIRD READING AND FINAL PASSAGE

This is the stage at which the fate of a bill is usually decided. Action may be to amend a bill, substitute one bill for another, send a bill back to committee, refer it to another committee or defeat it altogether.

5. VOTING ON A BILL

Following a sometimes-lengthy debate on a bill, a final and recorded vote is taken on whether it is to pass. There must be a quorum of the committee present and every bill requires at least a majority vote of the members present and voting in order to pass. A quorum is generally a simple majority of the members.

6. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The bill is sent to the other house and repeats much of the procedure outlined above. Both houses must agree on the final form of a bill. If either house fails to concur with an amendment, the differences must be reconciled by a conference committee representing both the House and Senate. A compromise worked out in a conference committee is subject to approval by both houses.

7. ENROLLING AND ENGROSSING

After passage by both houses, a bill is carefully copied by the enrolling and engrossing staff of the house in which it originated, signed by the presiding officers of each house and sent to the governor.

8. GOVERNOR'S ACTION

The governor may sign a bill, veto it or, if it carries an appropriation, partially veto it. The legislature may override the governor's veto by a two-thirds majority vote of each house.



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OFFICE OF AFRICAN AMERICAN AFFAIRS

Director-designate: Amy Whitfield
505-383-6222, oaaa.state.nm.us
310 San Pedro, Ste. 230, Albuquerque, NM 87108
Sets out to positively affect the perception, education, health and development of African-Americans in New Mexico.

AGING AND LONG-TERM SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Katrina Hotrum-Lopez
505-476-4799, naging.state.nm.us
2550 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505
P.O. Box 27118, Santa Fe, NM 87502-7118
Dedicated to helping New Mexico lead the nation in healthy aging and supporting older adults and adults with disabilities.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Director: Jeff Witte
575-646-3007, nmda.nmsu.edu
3190 S. Espina St., Las Cruces, NM 88003
Ensures a safe and secure food supply and a uniform and fair marketplace, protects natural resources and the environment and supports trade.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Brian Blalock
505-827-7606, cyfd.org
P.O. Drawer 5160, Santa Fe, NM 87502-5160
Provides an array of prevention, intervention, rehabilitative and after-care services to New Mexico children and their families.

CORRECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Alisha Tafoya Lucero
505-827-8645, cd.nm.gov
4337 NM 14, Santa Fe, NM 87508
P.O. Box 27116, Santa Fe NM 87502-0116
Oversees the incarceration of inmates in six state-owned and operated prisons and five private facilities. It also monitors parole and probation, and assists in an offender's release into society.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Debra Garcia y Griego
505-827-6364, newmexicoculture.org
Bataan Memorial Building, 407 Galisteo St., Ste. 260, Santa Fe, NM 87501
Represents New Mexico's dedication to preserving and celebrating the cultural integrity and diversity of the state. The department oversees a broad range of New Mexico's arts and cultural heritage agencies.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Elizabeth Groginsky
800-832-1321, nmececd.org
P.O. Box 5619, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Created July 1, 2020, the department's aim is to create a more cohesive, equitable and effective early childhood system in New Mexico, coordinating a continuum of programs from prenatal to age 5.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Alicia Keyes
505-827-0300, gonm.biz
Joseph M. Montoya Building, 1100 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
P.O. Box 20003, Santa Fe, NM 87504-5003
State's main agency in recruiting businesses and improving the state's economy; also provides a variety of assistance to New Mexico businesses.

ENERGY, MINERALS & NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Sarah Cottrell Propst
505-476-3200, emnrd.state.nm.us
1220 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Oversees the state's energy conservation, forestry, mining and minerals, oil conservation, state parks and the youth conservation corps.

OFFICE OF THE STATE ENGINEER

Secretary: John R. D'Antonio Jr.
505-827-6091, ose.state.nm.us
Concha Ortiz y Pino Building, 130 S. Capitol St., Santa Fe, NM 87504
Department in charge of administering the state's water resources. The state engineer has power over the supervision, measurement, appropriation and distribution of all surface and groundwater in New Mexico, including streams and rivers that cross state boundaries.

ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

Secretary: James C. Kenney
800-219-6157, env.nm.gov
Harold L. Runnels Building, 1190 St. Francis Drive, Ste. N4050, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Tasked with the responsibility of safeguarding the state's air and other natural resources and oversees food, medical and workplace safety through inspections and enforcement. Monitors groundwater quality and waste disposal, including hazardous and nuclear waste.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

Secretary: Debbie Romero
505-827-4985, nmdfa.state.nm.us
407 Galisteo St., Room 180, Santa Fe, NM 87501
Provides sound fiscal advice and problem-solving support to the governor and budget direction and fiscal oversight to state agencies and local governments. Ensures tax dollars are spent wisely.

GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Ken Ortiz
505-827-2000, generalservices.state.nm.us
Joseph Montoya Building, 1100 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87502
P.O. Box 6850, Santa Fe, NM 87502
Furnishes essential resources and services that support state agencies, public employees and their dependents, local public bodies, public schools and institutions of higher education, state employee insurance coverage and health benefits, facility design, construction management and printing and graphic design services.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Secretary: Tracie C. Collins, secretary-designate
505-827-2613, nmhealth.org
Harold Runnels Building, 1190 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Promotes health and sound health policy, prevents disease and disability, improves health services systems and ensures that essential public health functions and safety net services are available to New Mexicans.

HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Secretary: Stephanie Rodriguez, acting secretary
505-476-8400, hed.state.nm.us
2044 Galisteo St., Ste. 4, Santa Fe, NM 87505
Provides New Mexicans with the support and advocacy needed to succeed in reaching their full potential through higher education. This is done through policies, programs and services.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**Secretary:** Bianca Ortiz Wertheim

505-476-9600, nmdhsem.org

13 Bataan Blvd., Santa Fe, NM 87508

Responsible for preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery at a state level. It helps to lead New Mexico's response to emergencies and disasters while providing for the safety and welfare of citizens.

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**Secretary:** David Scrase

505-827-7750, hsd.state.nm.us

P.O. Box 2348, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Administers state and federally funded programs, including health insurance for most low- and middle-income children and many elderly, disabled and poor adults; provides financial assistance, job training, food stamps and child support enforcement.

INDIAN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT**Secretary:** Lynn Trujillo

505-476-1600, iad.state.nm.us

Wendell Chino Building, 1220 S. St. Francis Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Implements policies by working with communities to assist American Indians in improving health care, economic development, infrastructure and quality of life.

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**Secretary:** John Salazar

505-827-0000, doit.state.nm.us

715 Alta Vista St., Santa Fe, NM 87505

P.O. Box 22550, Santa Fe, NM 87502

Strives to provide state government a strong technical foundation to better serve its citizens and to create more accountability and efficiency in the information technology arena.

MILITARY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT / NEW MEXICO NATIONAL GUARD**Adjutant general:** Maj. Gen. Kenneth A. Nava

505-407-3300, www.dma.state.nm.us

Joint Forces Headquarters, 47 Bataan Blvd., Santa Fe, NM 87508

An initial military responder in all domestic emergencies.

LAW OFFICES OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER**Chief Public Defender:** Bennett J. Baur

505-395-2888, lopdnm.us

301 N. Guadalupe St., Santa Fe, NM 87501

Provides defense counsel for those who cannot otherwise afford a private lawyer; charged with carrying out general administration of the entire department, which employs approximately 375 people statewide.

PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**Secretary:** Ryan Stewart

505-827-5800, ped.state.nm.us

Jerry Apodaca Education Building, 300 Don Gaspar Ave., Santa Fe, NM 87501

Oversees all public schools and charter schools throughout New Mexico. The department strategically works to improve the quality of New Mexico's students.

PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENT**Interim Secretary:** Tim Johnson

505-827-3370, dps.state.nm.us

4491 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87507

P.O. Box 1628, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1628

Protects human life and property through the detection and prevention of criminal activity and enforcement of state laws and regulations.

REGULATION AND LICENSING DEPARTMENT**Superintendent:** Linda Trujillo, deputy superintendent

505-476-4500, rld.state.nm.us

Toney Anaya Building, 2550 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Licenses and regulates individuals and businesses in 35 separate industries and professions. Examines and licenses qualified applicants in professional and industry occupations; issues permits, charters and licenses; performs code inspections; resolves claims in the construction industries; licenses the sale, service and public consumption of alcoholic beverages, industry training and education on statutory compliance, prosecuting citations and otherwise enforcing the Liquor Control Act.

STATE PERSONNEL OFFICE**Director:** Pam Coleman

505-476-7759, spo.state.nm.us

2600 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Provides human resource leadership, direction and services to maximize state government's ability to better serve New Mexico.

TAXATION AND REVENUE DEPARTMENT**Acting Secretary:** Stephanie Schardin Clarke

505-827-0700, tax.newmexico.gov

1100 S. St. Francis Dr., Santa Fe, NM 87504

Collects tax dollars and distributes them according to state law. It also administers drivers licensing and motor vehicle registration laws.

TOURISM DEPARTMENT**Secretary:** Jen Schroer

505-827-7400, newmexico.org

491 Old Santa Fe Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87501

Promotes New Mexico as a tourist attraction by working with communities, travel agencies and individual businesses.

TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT**Secretary:** Michael Sandoval

505-795-1401, dot.state.nm.us

1120 Cerrillos Road, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149

P.O. Box 1149, Santa Fe, NM 87504-1149

Provides a safe and efficient transportation system for the traveling public, while promoting economic development and preserving the environment of New Mexico.

VETERAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT**Secretary:** Sonya L. Smith, secretary-designate

505-383-2400, nmdvs.org

407 Galisteo St., Room 134, Santa Fe, NM 87504

Assists veterans, their widows and children to establish the privileges to which they are legally entitled.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION**Director:** Loretta Lopez

505-841-6000, workerscomp.nm.gov

1596 Pacheco St., Ste. 202 Santa Fe, NM 87505

Provides many programs and services to employers, workers, insurance carriers and self-insured businesses, health care providers and related organizations.

DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS**Secretary:** Bill McCamley

505-841-8405, dws.state.nm.us/en-us

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Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: 575-523-6561

Website:

www.heinrich.senate.gov



Senator Ben Ray Lujan

DEMOCRAT

Address:

Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Suite B40C,
Washington, D.C. 20510

Phone: 202-224-6621

201 N. Church St., Suite 201B,
Las Cruces, N.M. 88001

Phone: 575-526-5475

Sen. Lujan also has offices
in Santa Fe and Portales.
Visit www.lujan.senate.gov.

U.S. REPRESENTATIVES



Yvette Herrell

REPUBLICAN, DISTRICT 2

Elected Nov. 3, 2020

Represented Otero County,
District 51, in the New Mexico
House of Representatives,
2011-18

Born in Ruidoso, N.M. Age: 56
yvetteherrell.com

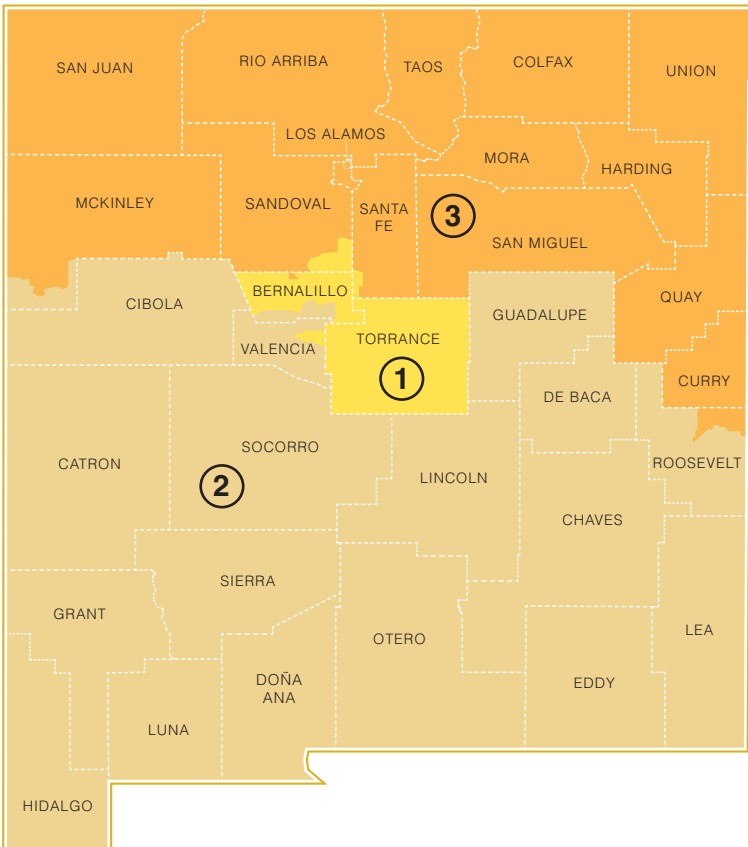


Teresa Leger Fernandez

DEMOCRAT, DISTRICT 3

Elected Nov. 3, 2020

Born in Las Vegas, N.M.
Age: 60, attorney
teresaforall.com



SPECIAL ELECTION DISTRICT 1

Following Deb Haaland's resignation from her U.S. House seat to become secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior, the state's major political parties will select candidates to run in a special election to replace Haaland. The special election will be held 77-91 days after the resignation.

First Session of the 55th Legislature

BY WALTER RUBEL
SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO JOURNALISM COLLABORATIVE

The New Mexico Senate of the next four years will be younger and less experienced as a result of the 2020 elections.

Departing senators John Arthur Smith, D-Deming (32 years); William Payne, R-Albuquerque (24 years); Mary Kay Papen, D-Las Cruces (20 years) and Richard Martinez, D-Española (20 years) had a combined 96 years serving in the Senate.

They also held some of the Senate's top leadership positions. Papen was president pro tempore. Smith was chairman of the Finance Committee. They were both defeated in the Democratic Primary Election.

Some of the Democratic Primary winners, however, were beaten in the General Election. Republican Joshua Sanchez claimed the seat that had been held for two terms by Democrat Clemente Sanchez of Grants. And in District 35, Crystal Diamond won a seat that had been held by Democrats from Deming for more than six decades. Smith had represented the district since his first win in 1988. Before that, Ike Smalley had held the seat for 32 years.

Papen's seat remained in Democrats' hands. Carrie Hamblen defeated Republican Charles Wendler in the General Election after ousting Papen in the Primary.

Other Senate veterans losing or vacating seats this year include John Sapien, D-Corales, and Sander Rue, R-Albuquerque, who both served for 12 years.

Sen. Jeff Steinborn, D-Las Cruces, said the new members have different life experiences and bring a sense of idealism to the Senate, he said.

"People who have been there a long time tend to get attached to doing things the way they've always been done," Steinborn said.

Electing a new president pro tempore will

**STARTS JAN. 19 AT NOON,
ENDS MARCH 20 AT NOON**

Senate:

27 Democrats, 15 Republicans
(Dems gain one seat from 2020)

House:

45 Democrats, 24 Republicans,
1 Independent
(Dems lose 2 seats, 1 to GOP
and 1 to Independent)

be one of the first items on the agenda when the Senate meets in January.

Committee chairmanships, including the new head of the Finance Committee, will be picked within the Democratic caucus.

Sen. Bill Soules, D-Las Cruces, said he is concerned that with the new makeup of the Senate, Republican members may lose their ability to be an effective opposition.

"When one side has all the power, I'm worried that more people will put out bad legislation with good intentions," Soules said. "That's going to make me more hyper-vigilant."

Five flips in Senate

Five seats were flipped in the Senate, two going for Republicans and three for Democrats.

Both Republican gains came after successful Primary challenges to oust Smith and Sanchez.

Democrats flipped in districts 10, 20 and 23.

In District 10, incumbent Candace Gould, R-Albuquerque, was defeated by Democrat Katy Duhigg. District 20 is the seat Payne had held since his first win in 1996. His decision to step down opened the door for Democrat Martin Hickey to win the seat. In District 23, Rue lost the seat he held for three terms to Democrat Harold James Pope Jr.

Other new members of the Senate are Brenda Grace McKenna, D, in District 9; Gregg Schmedes, R, in District 19 and Siah Correa Hemphill, D, in District 28. Schmedes moves to the Senate after previously serving District 22 in the House.

Fewer changes in House

Things are more stable in the House of Representatives, with all leaders winning re-election and the vast majority of incumbents returning.

Only one seat was flipped from blue to

red this year in the House. Luis Terrazas, a Republican business owner from Silver City, defeated incumbent Rudy Martinez in House District 39, which stretches from Silver City to Doña Ana County. The seat has gone back and forth in recent years. Republican John Zimmerman of Las Cruces was elected in 2014, the year when Republicans gained control of the House. Martinez held the seat 2007-14 and since 2017.

Republicans almost picked up the seat in Doña Ana County's District 53, which also includes a chunk of Otero County. Former Representative for the district, Republican Ricky Little, came very close to regaining his old spot, but late ballots put Democrat incumbent Willie Madrid ahead. After the mandatory re-count, Madrid had won by a mere 36 votes.

The House will have its second Independent in recent years, following the victory of Brittany Barreras in Albuquerque's District 12. Democratic incumbent Art De La Cruz ran as a write-in candidate, but recorded no votes, according to the Secretary of State's website. Barreras said she plans to work with members from both parties.

She will be the first Independent since 2011, when Rep. Andy Nuñez of Hatch changed his party affiliation from Democratic to Independent following a dispute with former Speaker Ben Lujan. Nuñez would later change to Republican.

In southeast New Mexico, Rep. David Garcia, R-Eunice, gave up his District 61 House seat to challenge Gregg Fulfer, R-Jal, in the Republican Primary for the Senate seat in District 41. Fulfer had been appointed by former Gov. Susana Martinez to replace former Sen. Carroll Leavell, who was first elected to the Senate in 1996.

Garcia beat Fulfer in the Primary to win the Senate seat. Republican Randall Pettigrew was uncontested for the District 61 House seat.

Other new members include Democrats Meredith Dixon, District 20; Roger Evan Montoya, District 40; Kristina Ortiz, District 42 and Ambrose Castellano, District 70. Republican new members are T. Ryan Lane, District 3; Stefani Lord, District 22 and Joshua Hernandez, District 60.

Dixon replaced Abbas Akhil, who was the state's first Muslim member of the Legislature. He stepped down to have more time to spend with his grandchildren.





GOVERNOR

MICHELLE LUJAN

Grisham

NEW MEXICO'S 32ND GOVERNOR

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

AGE: 60

BIRTHPLACE: Santa Fe, N.M.
(grew up in Los Alamos)

EDUCATION:

Law degree, University of New Mexico School of Law

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Bernalillo County Commission, 2011-12; U.S. House of Representatives, New Mexico District 1, 2013-18; secretary of the state departments of Aging and Long-Term Services, and Health under three governors

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SECRETARY OF STATE

MAGGIE TOULOUSE

Oliver

NEW MEXICO'S 26TH SECRETARY OF STATE

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

AGE: 43

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, N.M.

EDUCATION: Bachelor's

degree in political science and Spanish, masters degree in political science, UNM

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Bernalillo County Clerk, 2007-16; dropped out Democratic primary for U.S. Senate, 2019

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STATE AUDITOR

BRIAN S.

Colon

NEW MEXICO'S 28TH STATE AUDITOR

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

AGE: 50

BIRTHPLACE: New York City; raised in Los Lunas, Bosque Farms and Albuquerque

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree

in finance, 1998, NMSU; law degree, 2001, UNM School of Law

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Ran for mayor of Albuquerque, 2017; ran for lieutenant governor, 2010; state chair, New Mexico Democratic Party, 2007-09

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LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
HENRY C. 'HOWIE'
Morales

**NEW MEXICO'S 30TH
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR**

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

AGE: 48

BIRTHPLACE: Silver City, N.M.

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of science in education/
biology, master of arts in bilingual
special education, WNMU; Ph.D. in
curriculum and instruction, NMSU

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

New Mexico state senator, 2008-
18; Grant County clerk, 2005-08;
New Mexico Public Education
Department interim secretary

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ATTORNEY GENERAL
HECTOR HUGO
Balderas

**NEW MEXICO'S 31ST
ATTORNEY GENERAL**

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

AGE: 47

BIRTHPLACE: Denver, Colorado;
raised in Wagon Mound, N.M.

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree,
New Mexico Highlands University;
law degree, UNM School of Law

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

State auditor, 2006-14;
New Mexico state representative,
2004-06; ran for U.S. Senate, 2012,
lost in the Democratic primary

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STATE TREASURER
TIM
Eichenberg

**NEW MEXICO'S 30TH
STATE TREASURER**

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

BIRTHPLACE: Los Alamos, N.M.

EDUCATION: BA, UNM, 1989;
General Contractors License,
New Mexico Real Estate Broker

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

New Mexico state senator,
2009-13, Bernalillo County
treasurer, 1975-78

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JEFF Witte

Ag Secretary says resilience is crucial moving into the new year

BY BRANDON LARRAÑAGA
NMDA COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

The agriculture industry in New Mexico will hope for change entering 2021 after severe drought conditions and the pandemic have plagued the industry for months. With the hope that there is some return to normal within the state, New Mexico Secretary of Agriculture Jeff Witte said that producers in the state will continue to work harder than ever in order to continue to provide for all citizens of New Mexico.

“New Mexico agriculturalists will be entering 2021 with the knowledge that a dry, La Niña-induced winter moisture season is behind them and with the hope that a wet spring and summer monsoon season and stabilized markets are ahead,” said Witte. “COVID-19 certainly had an impact on agriculture, up and down the supply chain, and that impacted our farmers’ and ranchers’ ability to market their products. I often say, ‘Our producers are some of the most resilient in the world.’ They have dealt with drought, winter storms, fires and much more. Each time, they figure out a method to produce what we cherish most, our good New Mexico food products.”

While agriculturalists in the state are eager for more moisture and better overall conditions in the months ahead,

a more stable market is among the hopes for all. The pandemic has taken a severe toll on many industries, specifically the oil and gas fields. New Mexico’s economy is extremely reliant on revenues from both of these areas and will instead turn to the food processing industry in the state as a crutch.

“The coming legislative session will be a challenging one for the entire state,” Witte said. “While we don’t have a specific legislative priority for the department, we will be closely following proposals to help develop the value-added agriculture sector in New Mexico. We have long been a producer state, often sending our raw products someplace else to further add consumer value and then bringing those same enhanced products back to New Mexico for consumers to enjoy. We have a priority to grow the value-added sector in the state.”

With the adjustment toward more reliance on local producers and processors to bolster the economy, there is also an opportunity to draw public attention and recognition to the importance of local agriculture.

“We are No. 1 in pecan production, No. 1 in chile production, No. 1 in

■ WITTE CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

YEARS IN OFFICE: 10

AGE: 58

BIRTHPLACE: Santa Fe, N.M. (grew up on a ranch near Stanley, N.M.)

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in agricultural business management, master’s degree in agricultural economics, both from New Mexico State University.

OTHER EXPERIENCE: Director of governmental affairs for the New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau

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RALLY AROUND LOCAL

The New Mexico Department of Agriculture challenges each New Mexican household to increase spending by at least \$5 per week on New Mexico agricultural products.

+
+

Learn more at: elevateNMag.com

TRACIE Collins

Educator, research, scientist named state's secretary of health

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham appointed Tracie C. Collins, MD, as the new secretary of the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) in late 2020.

Collins was dean of the College of Population Health at the University of New Mexico. She became NMDOH secretary-designate Dec. 15.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Dr. Collins to our team," Lujan Grisham said in a news release. "New Mexico has never needed experienced and compassionate public health leadership more than right now. Dr. Collins will hit the ground running as part of our state's COVID-19 response effort with the Department of Health and indeed all of state government."

"I am honored and excited to serve our state as health secretary," Collins said. "I want to thank the governor for her confidence in me. This is a very challenging time for all of us. There is much work to be done to ensure the health and safety of New Mexicans. But I know the dedicated professionals of the Department of Health, and the many health care leaders throughout our state, are going to continue working tirelessly to address the needs of

our diverse communities, both in this current crisis and beyond."

Collins has served in myriad academic leadership roles, in addition to providing clinical care and conducting and overseeing reams of clinical research. Prior to her work at UNM, Collins served as chair of preventive medicine and public health at the University of Kansas, where she also served as the Kansas Health Foundation distinguished professor of public health and as a professor of internal medicine. At the University of Minnesota, Collins was co-leader of the Primary Care Research Consortium, co-director of the school's Center for Health Equity Research Core and an associate professor of medicine. In Texas, Collins was an assistant professor of medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine and director of the General Internal Medicine Consult Service of the Michael E. DeBakey V.A. Medical Center in Houston.

Collins has lectured in Nepal and Kenya in addition to her clinical education and research in Oklahoma, Texas, Minnesota, Kansas and New Mexico. She has produced almost 80 scholarly publications over the course of her



SECRETARY DESIGNATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

career and maintains a clinical practice as a vascular specialist.

Collins earned a master of public health degree from the Harvard School of Public Health, where she also served as a clinical instructor, and a master of health care delivery science degree from Dartmouth College. She earned a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Oklahoma and a bachelor's degree, in chemistry, from the University of Central Oklahoma.

Collins replaces former NMDOH Sec. Kathleen Kunkel, who retired in the fall. NMDOH general counsel Billy Jimenez had served as interim NMDOH secretary. He returned to his role as general counsel when Collins became New Mexico Department of Health secretary-designate.

■ WITTE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

summer onion production, Top 10 in milk and cheese production and have a wonderful beef sector which can provide locally raised meat to our consumers through retail and restaurant business," Witte said. "We also produce lettuce, cabbage and other fresh vegetables, both large scale and small scale, that our consumers enjoy through farmers markets and local retail

establishments. We have the capacity to enhance the New Mexico-grown opportunities."

This increased awareness of and attention to our state's own industries is one positive thing that has come from the last year. If local food systems continue to remain on the rise, it could mean great things for our state's economy.

"As we reflect on this past year, one silver

lining emerged, and that is the importance of the local food system," Witte said. "Our producers, having to develop alternate markets, were able to connect with consumers directly. A recent NMSU study indicated that if we increased our local purchasing of local food by 15 percent, our state economy would grow over \$750 million per year! This is a trend that will help New Mexico grow."



SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES

SONYA L. Smith

Sonya L. Smith named Veterans Services secretary in October

BY MIKE COOK

Sonya L. Smith was appointed as secretary of the New Mexico Department of Veterans Services (NMDVS) by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham Oct. 23, following the retirement of Judy M. Griego as cabinet secretary.

Sec.-designate Smith is scheduled for a formal confirmation to the post during the 2021 New Mexico Legislative session.

Smith comes to NMDVS from the New Mexico Department of Health, where she served as a special projects coordinator,

specifically helping guide the efforts of the agency's COVID-19 testing team. Prior to that, Smith served as director of compliance of primary care programs at Southwest Care Center in Santa Fe; and before that, as the clinical compliance manager at the University of New Mexico Truman Health Services Clinic.

As a member of the United States Air Force Reserve, Smith served as a medical technician in Operation Desert Shield and Operation Desert Storm. Upon receiving

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her honorable discharge, she earned a bachelor's degree in health services management from Norfolk State University in her hometown of Norfolk, Virginia.

Smith testified before the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee Nov. 16, seeking approval of NMDVS' proposed \$4.9 million budget for fiscal year 2022.

The requested amount is needed to carry out NMDVS' mandate to assist the state's approximately 154,000 veterans and their families, NMDVS said in a news release.



SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

DR. DAVID R. Scrase

David R. Scrase, MD, was appointed as secretary of the New Mexico Human Services Department (NMHSD) by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham soon after her election in November 2018. He was confirmed as secretary by the New Mexico Senate Feb. 11, 2019.

Scrase is a board-certified internist and geriatrician, and at the time of his appointment was the interim division chief for general internal medicine and the chief of geriatrics at the University of New Mexico. His first love and understood calling is as a primary-care physician, and he has continuously cared for patients for more than 30 years, despite concurrent service in administrative roles. He continues to see patients while serving as NMHSD secretary.

Scrase has held a variety of adminis-

trative positions, including nine years in medical education, as well as numerous healthcare executive positions in Michigan and New Mexico. Since moving to New Mexico more than 20 years ago, he has been active on many New Mexico public policy committees and community organizations, including four years as director and treasurer of Equality New Mexico and as a member of the Board of Menaul School in Albuquerque. Scrase served on Gov. Bill Richardson's Insure New Mexico! Committee and Health Care for New Mexicans Committee; the national Ambulatory Quality Association, setting quality metrics for professional practice; and the executive committee of the New Mexico Association of Commerce and Industry.

Scrase worked closely with the New

Mexico Medicaid program for three years before his appointment as NMHSD secretary, working to enhance the treatment of Hepatitis C for Medicaid members and to improve quality and reduce hospital readmissions in all New Mexico nursing facilities.

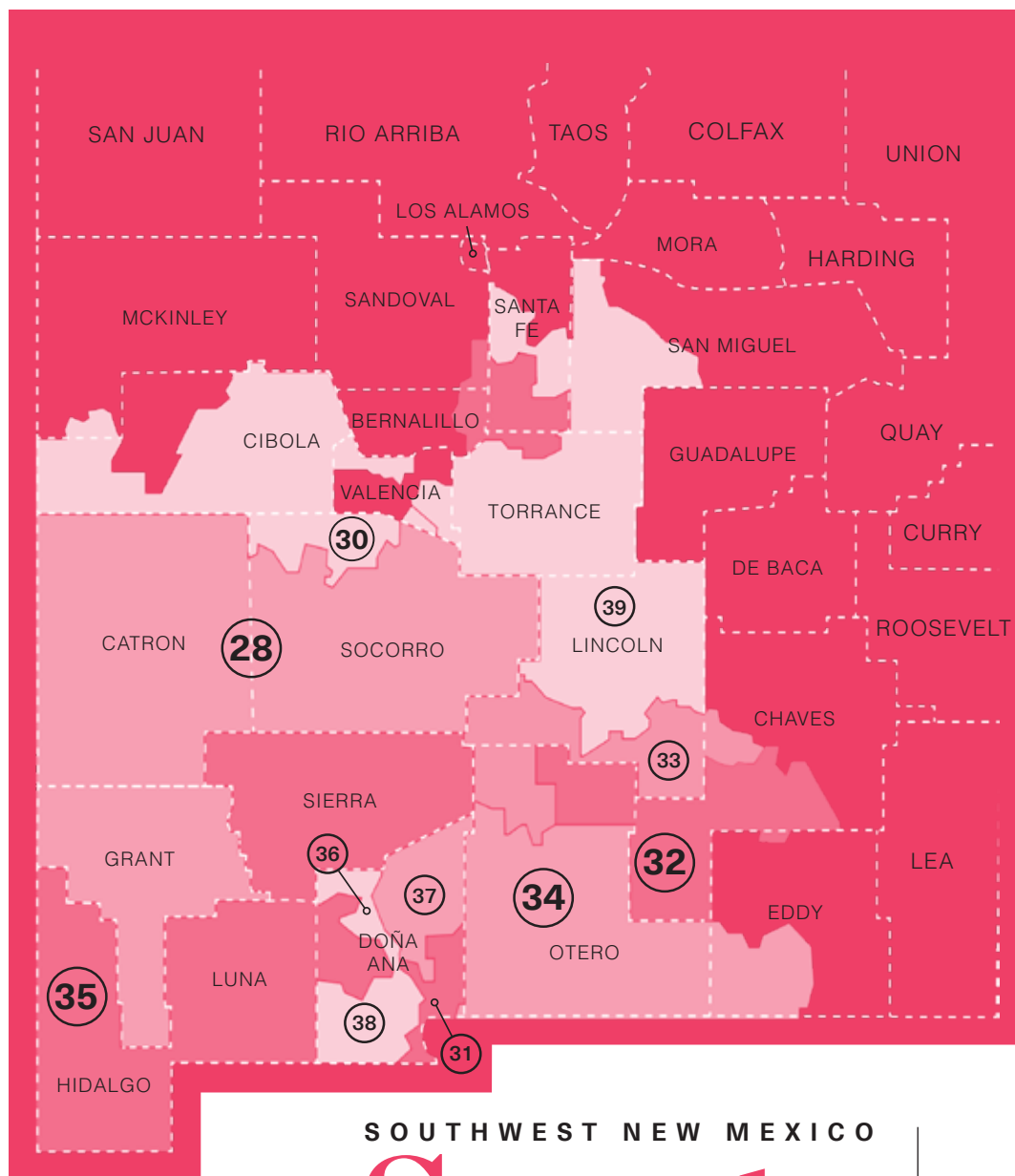
While not seeing patients and teaching, he also works as a popular public speaker, consultant and writer. Scrase regularly provides entertaining talks at the local and national level on a wide variety of topics, including fascinating medical cases, successful aging, health policy, mindfulness and happiness. Under the pen name of David Roberts, in 2013 he published the book "Practice Makes Perfect: How One Doctor Found the Meaning of Lives," which chronicles some of the lessons he has learned from his most interesting patients.

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- 3 SHANNON D. PINTO
- 4 GEORGE MUÑOZ
- 5 LEO JARAMILLO
- 6 ROBERTO "BOBBY" GONZALES
- 7 PAT WOODS
- 8 PETE CAMPOS
- 9 BRENDA GRACE MCKENNA
- 10 KATY M. DUHIGG
- 11 LINDA LOPEZ
- 12 GERALD ORTIZ Y PINO
- 13 BILL O'NEILL
- 14 MICHAEL PADILLA
- 15 DANIEL IVEY-SOTO
- 16 ANTOINETTE SEDILLO LOPEZ
- 17 MIMI STEWART
- 18 BILL G. TALLMAN
- 19 GREG W. SCHMEDES
- 20 MARTIN E. HICKEY
- 21 MARK MOORES
- 22 BENNY J. SHENDO JR.
- 23 HAROLD JAMES POPE JR.
- 24 NANCY RODRIGUEZ
- 25 PETER WIRTH
- 26 JACOB CANDELARIA
- 27 STUART INGLE
- 28 SIAH CORREA HEMPHILL
- 29 GREGORY A. BACA
- 30 JOSHUA A. SANCHEZ
- 31 JOSEPH CERVANTES
- 32 CLIFF R. PIRTLE
- 33 WILLIAM "BILL" BURT
- 34 RON GRIGGS
- 35 CRYSTAL DIAMOND
- 36 JEFF STEINBORN
- 37 WILLIAM "BILL" SOULES
- 38 CARRIE HAMBLÉN
- 39 ELIZABETH STEFANICS
- 40 CRAIG BRANDT
- 41 DAVID M. GALLEGOS
- 42 GAY KERNAN



SOUTHWEST NEW MEXICO

Senate DISTRICT MAP



SENATOR PROFILES



DISTRICT 28
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Cliff Pirtle
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Crystal Diamond
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Joshua A. Sanchez
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Jeff Steinborn
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DISTRICT 39
Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics
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DISTRICT 31
Joseph Cervantes
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DISTRICT 34
Ron Griggs
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DISTRICT 37
William "Bill" Soules
Page 29



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SENATE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE:
D-Mimi Stewart, Bernalillo County
(must be voted on by full Senate)

MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER:
Peter Wirth, D-Santa Fe County

MAJORITY WHIP:
Linda Lopez, D-Bernalillo County

President Pro Tempore to be voted in during the session.
To reach your legislator during the session, call 505-986-4300.

MINORITY FLOOR LEADER:
Greg Baca, R-Bernalillo
and Valencia counties

MINORITY WHIP:
Craig Brandt, R-Sandoval County





SIAH CORREA

Hemphill

New senator: Close gaps in education, health care and jobs

DISTRICT 28

COUNTIES SERVED: Catron, Grant and Socorro

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: New

AGE: 49

BIRTHPLACE: Born in British Columbia and raised in Grant County

PROFESSION: Educator, teacher trainer, school psychologist

EDUCATION: Western New Mexico University, B.A. in elementary education and M.A. in psychology

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

What bills do you plan to introduce in the 2021 session?

The specific bills I will introduce are still under consideration, but my focus will be on legislation to help reduce disparities and bring resources to our rural communities, with an emphasis on education, health care and sustainable jobs that provide a living wage.

Do you think the governor will again introduce legislation to legalize the

recreational use of marijuana in the state? If so, how will you vote on legalization?

I will need to review the bill first if one is introduced. I do support legalizing recreational marijuana, but we need to take care and do it right, including making sure that small growers are supported, that the health of our youth is protected and that we take into consideration what other states have learned from their own experience with legalization.

What are the biggest budget priorities for the session?

Budget priorities are likely to focus on (a) infrastructure most needed to recover from the pandemic, including internet access, public safety, medical equipment and vaccine rollout; (b) ensuring the maximum possible funding for education and health care; (c) leveraging aid for small businesses to revive and recover; and (d) support for the unusually high number of unemployed.

What are the capital outlay priorities for your district?

The capital outlay priorities in my district include addressing the basic needs of the communities in the areas of water, wastewater, facilities, medical needs and public safety. I will also prioritize capital outlay projects that can help create sustainable economic growth and diversification opportunities.

Do you think the 2021 session is likely to be held entirely remotely?

The many benefits of having an in-person session will be weighed against the risks posed by COVID-19 spread. Although there is no easy answer or single indicator, I am confident that our leadership will use the data available

to make a decision that prioritizes the health and well-being of us all.

Will that impact how the legislature does its business during the session? If so, how?

Participating in meetings remotely has several challenges, including difficulties with technology, public access and communication. On the other hand, it also has definite advantages (which many of us have already experienced), namely that citizens from around the state can participate without the very significant time and expense requirements of traveling to Santa Fe. For many of my constituents, coming to the session in person involves a five-six hour drive one-way, an overnight stay and all the gas, food and lodging expenses that entails. To the extent that we might need to limit in-person meetings during the session, it will be important that we make the best of these unusual circumstances and provide plenty of opportunities for online and phone participation from our constituents.

What are the biggest concerns in your district?

The main concerns of my district are similar to those in most of the state – access to affordable health care and behavioral health care, access to high-quality education, sustainable and good-paying jobs, support for small businesses, and basic infrastructure needs. In rural communities, addressing these concerns pose even greater challenges.

What else would you like to add?

As a school psychologist my work has been protecting the educational rights, opportunities and well-being of all, which I will continue to do as state senator.

**DISTRICT 30****JOSHUA A.****Sanchez**

New Senator ready to hit the ground running

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Joshua Adolph Sanchez is an American businessman and politician who is a member-elect of the New Mexico Senate. Elected in 2020, he assumes office on Jan. 19.

Sanchez is a strong proponent of getting people back on the job.

“New Mexico thrives when the people of New Mexico are allowed to return to work,” he said.

He also said the state needs to reform its approach to the education system and spending.

“We aren’t getting a good return on our investment into education,” he said on an Albuquerque Journal questionnaire. “I am a proponent of kids being career-ready when they graduate high school if they are

not going to choose to go to college.”

Sanchez opposes the legalization of recreational marijuana.

“Many jobs require drug testing and New Mexico businesses struggle to get employees that can meet this requirement now, recreational marijuana will not help this at all,” he said.

He also opposes enacting a new state law that would allow police officers to be sued individually and a constitutional amendment that would withdraw more money from the Land Grant Permanent Fund and restrictions on fracking.

“I am very aware of climate change and I understand that our world is always changing and we must be good stewards to do our part to not accelerate the process,”

COUNTIES SERVED: Cibola, Socorro, McKinley and Valencia

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: New

AGE: 39

BIRTHPLACE: Belen, N.M.

PROFESSION: Small business owner, Five years working for the Rio Grande Conservancy District

EDUCATION: Belen High School

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: None

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he said. “I would support renewable energy products that are truly renewable.”

He believes the state needs to build a career-ready educational system to attract businesses outside of the oil and gas industry.

“Businesses will come to New Mexico because we will be able to then supply quality, trained employees,” he said.

**DISTRICT 32****CLIFF****Pirtle**

Pirtle now a seasoned veteran of the Senate

Pirtle, originally elected to the state Senate in 2012, and re-elected in 2016, is now a veteran of the chamber, going into his ninth session, despite being the youngest member of the senate, at age 35.

Pirtle spends much of his days away from the legislature farming in Chaves County.

His District 32 covers southern Chaves County – including Roswell where he makes his home – and a small portion of

Eddy County.

He served on the 20-member Governor’s Working Group on Cannabis Legalization, established by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

Regarding legalization, Pirtle told NM Political Report in July 2019 “This is something that is inevitable, and we need to have a part in the framework in how it’s done to ensure our concerns are met.”

He has served on the Indian Affairs,

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves, Eddy

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: 8

AGE: 35

PROFESSION: Farmer

EDUCATION: Roswell High School

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Land Grant, Legislative Health & Human Services and Rules committees.

In 2018 Pirtle introduced legislation to institute permanent Daylight-Saving Time. For the second time, it passed the senate on a vote of 25-17 but didn’t make it to a vote in the House.

Pirtle also regularly plays in the annual House vs. Senate charity basketball game, which raises money for the University of New Mexico Comprehensive Cancer Center.



DISTRICT 31

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eight

AGE: 59

BIRTHPLACE: Las Cruces

PROFESSION: Attorney

EDUCATION: Bachelor's in architecture, University of New Mexico; master's in architecture, California Polytechnic State University; juris doctorate, UNM

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Doña Ana County Commission, 1998-2001; New Mexico House of Representatives, 2001-12

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BY MIKE COOK

With 12 years in the New Mexico House of Representatives (2001-12) and eight years in the state Senate (2013-), Las Cruces attorney Joseph Cervantes has more years of service in the New Mexico Legislature than any other member of the Doña Ana County delegation.

Bill Introductions

The state's COVID-19 pandemic responses will dominate the 2021 session. My focus will be legislation to preserve jobs and the employers who create those jobs. I will continue to introduce legislation to fundamentally re-

JOSEPH Cervantes

Cervantes: COVID-19 response tops agenda

structure how we govern in terms of the legislature's role. We need to be able to call ourselves into session immediately when necessary. Federal support should be appropriated by legislative process and overseen to prevent waste and fraud. I will also work on the proposed new civil rights legislation to assure law enforcement abuses have consequences.

Governor's bill introductions

I have not yet heard the governor express an agenda for the 2021 session, and have not been asked by her to sponsor any new initiatives.

Governor bill on recreational marijuana

I passed the law which decriminalized marijuana for personal use, and don't believe drug abuse should be handled in criminal courts or by incarceration. But the last attempt to legalize marijuana exposed the money motives underlying this issue. There are a few insiders who stand to make hundreds of millions of dollars, and the proposed law would have had the government buying and distributing the marijuana produced and marketed by those insiders. New Mexico has serious problems with drug and alcohol abuse and deaths, and the worst crime statistics in the country. I don't believe legalizing marijuana will improve those conditions.

Budget priorities

We are fortunate that in the past, legislators were unwilling to simply live for today and spend beyond our means, or pass debts on to the next generations. We need more reliable and consistent ways to have the revenue needed as opposed to our boom-and-bust cycles tied to oil and gas markets. This one source of revenue now makes up almost 40 percent of state revenue. Our budget needs to invest in the future which begins with public education, and then investment in job- and income-producing opportunities.

Capital outlay priorities

My priorities for capital outlay infra-

structure have always been to assure we have safe, clean and available water resources now and into our future. As a desert community, water is essential to all of our goals, and too often taken for granted. I will focus on water conservation, reuse, storage and delivery systems.

Remote 2021 session

The health risks require us to meet as much as possible using technology for remote gatherings. We have learned to use this technology daily in our business and schooling and that wonderful technology will ultimately mean more New Mexicans than ever can watch and participate in our government. I disagree with the idea this limits public participation and to the contrary, and in particular for those who don't live in Santa Fe, I believe this will open and improve the way we govern.

District concerns

I represent southern Doña Ana County and the state response to the COVID-19 pandemic remains the priority. Our proximity to Texas and international boundaries, and our regional shared economy, require a unique response rather than the blanket statewide response. Access to testing and medical care, public information and sharing, PPE and other resources are all unique in Doña Ana. Government shutdown of businesses must be far more thought out, specific and targeted. Ultimately having our children back into school is a greatest priority.

Broader economy

The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting oil and gas price collapses, should be a warning that New Mexico's government is built on an unstable foundation. We need a much broader economy to ever hope to prosper in the way all of our neighboring states have managed to accomplish. We want our youth to stay here after we invest so much in their education, and we want opportunities for people to get ahead here rather than have to leave to find those opportunities.

WILLIAM F. 'BILL'

Burt

Veterans, state could benefit from tax adjustment

BY RICHARD COLTHARP

Having spent his adult life in Alamogordo, next door to Holloman Air Force Base, Bill Burt understands the contributions of a military base to a community and, just as important, the contributions of military retirees.

However, New Mexico is one of just nine states in the country that taxes military pension income.

"Military people who have retired here are looking at other states that are more tax-friendly," Burt said.

As an incentive to keep those people in the Land of Enchantment, Burt plans to introduce a bill that would reduce or eliminate that tax.

"Any retirement they earn up to \$50,000 would not be taxed," Burt said. "There would be a three-year phase-in, and it could start in January 2022. If we're able to pass it, the message is sent that New Mexico is doing something. It would be huge, and I think it will draw people here."

"Most veterans have degrees, many with multiple degrees, and have been in management positions," he said. "This creates a high-tech, well-educated employment pool that stays in the state. It creates a new pool that can draw other companies to the state. The average age of retirees is between 42 and 46, so they usually get jobs, so now we generate tax income, and they buy homes, so we generate property tax."

There are other bills Burt is considering bringing, though specifics were not available at press time.

"There are a lot of opportunities and people trying to do some good things," he said. "If I can help make it happen, I'm all about that."

One bill likely to come up that Burt won't be all about is the effort to legalize recreational marijuana.

"I don't think it's helpful," Burt said of legalization. "New Mexico can't get a handle on DWIs, and you have a

field test for alcohol. With marijuana, there's no field test. It's still illegal at the federal level, and if we make it legal in this state and if a random drug test comes back positive, what does the employer do? If he's a driver, is his CDL in jeopardy? He did what the state said he could on his own time. It's all going to end up in court somewhere, taxing our already overstressed legal system. It's just an issue I cannot support at this particular time."

Historically, two of the biggest portions of the budget go toward education and healthcare, and Burt expects that to happen again. With the remaining portion, Burt believes investment in economic development is vital, and a big piece of that is broadband.

"We have a huge problem with WiFi for people on reservations, who own ranches, farms and live in mostly rural areas, who don't often have it," he said. "And even where we do have it, we need to look at upgrading to a level that competes with other states."

It's important not just for education, as the pandemic has taught, Burt said, but also for businesses, citing banking as just one example.

With several changes in the state Senate, including in some key leadership positions, Burt is hoping the focus remains on the constituents.

"In years past, the Senate has had an ability to act as a balance for the state on issues such as gun rights and marijuana," he said. "We have some newer senators who seem to be on the progressive side, and new leadership on the Republican side. I hope we can maintain decorum



DISTRICT 33

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves, Lincoln, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Nine

AGE: 69

BIRTHPLACE: Deming, N.M.

PROFESSION: Broadcaster

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in mass communications, New Mexico State University

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and the ability to have discussions, and it's not about an agenda, and not about a movement, but about taking care of the people in our districts who elected us, making sure we follow their wishes."

Bank 34 is proud of State Senator Bill Burt's legislative work and his efforts on our board.

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RON Griggs

Trying to untangle liquor laws sensibly

close, and the three licenses are sold to a national chain restaurant, chain pharmacy and grocery store. Or, the licenses go out of town, with no businesses to replace the closing ones.

“We’re going to put in a bill that makes several changes to the Liquor Control Act to make licenses more available, but at the same time not just destroy the current value of licenses,” said Sen. Ron Griggs, who expects others to issue bills regarding liquor laws as well.

“If you’ve got a license today, you want to be aware of what some of these bills are doing. This is an issue that, if its time is not right now, it is very soon.”

Griggs also seeks to introduce a bill that would modify the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA), which has helped communities throughout New Mexico with state assistance on projects. And while LEDA has benefited many businesses and organizations, Griggs would like to see the act be more flexible for retailers, especially those who want to renovate or revitalize older, existing buildings.

“I’d like to see it be more usable to communities that have their own local option tax, that benefits the community if it needs a retail establishment,” he said.

Another issue Griggs would like to address involves the modification of county courthouses. Many counties in New Mexico have the courtrooms that host the state’s judicial districts. If a district court requests repairs or upgrades to a county-owned courthouse, the county is on the hook for the bill.

“It’s a bill I introduced last year for a county that doesn’t have the money – and none really do – to rebuild or remodel without help,” Griggs said. “We’re going to set aside money from the general fund, and maybe do a 50 percent match.”

Such repairs have been requested across the state for infrastructure issues, safety concerns, health issues and more.

“Counties are required to provide a courthouse for these judicial districts, but those are state courts,” Griggs said. “Maybe the state should play a bigger role.”

“I’m hearing capital outlay might be a fair amount once again,” he said. “If so, we’ve got projects for police and fire equipment, park equipment and water and sewer projects. Cloudcroft is working on recreational projects, including an Alpine slide to provide more summertime opportunities. There are road projects in Carlsbad and Artesia.”

Most legislators and observers expect the introduction of a bill legalizing recreational marijuana.

“Oh, it’s not just being introduced, it’s passing,” Griggs said. “Concept is one thing, but bills, and the drafting of bills, is another. What’s in the bill? If you try to amend the bill and your amendment is successful, do you still vote against the bill? You want to change things to make them better, but with marijuana, I’m not sure we’re all convinced what the back end’s going to look like. On the front end, there’s the money it’s going to raise and all that, but what has it done in Washington and Nevada? Colorado has all the good and all the bad, but with New Mexico, you don’t know how much good and bad you’ll get. The door’s open very wide now in New Mexico. It’s coming. Whether I vote no or yes depends on the bill that’s presented.”

Griggs also has concerns about New Mexico’s budget, as revenue sources have gone away, but not been replaced.

“We lost coal in the northeast and the northwest,” he said. “We lost uranium in the northwest. Now some are trying to get rid of oil and gas, which is so much of our budget. If that happens, who pays the bills?”

“Our state has so much promise, so much potential. We had some federal help on the budget this year, and we should get through another session. But I’m worried about the budget after next year.”

DISTRICT 34

COUNTIES SERVED: Otero, Eddy, Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eight

AGE: 68

BIRTHPLACE: Portales, N.M.

PROFESSION: Business owner, Griggs Holdings LLC

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in business administration from New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Alamogordo City Council and Mayor of Alamogordo

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BY RICHARD COLTHARP

It’s a scene that has played out in every city in New Mexico, and hits smaller cities harder.

A longstanding local business, often in the second or third generation of a family, closes its doors. If the business is a bar, restaurant or store that sells liquor, the liquor license is typically sold to a company or individual who is not local. The licenses, often valued at half a million dollars or more, are usually too pricey for anyone but a large corporation.

How many times in a small New Mexico town has this happened: In the course of a decade, a locally owned bar, a locally owned restaurant and a locally owned liquor store

CRYSTAL Diamond

Ready to represent four counties

BY MIKE COOK

“There are so many opportunities, not just for the district, but for the state of New Mexico,” state Senator-elect Crystal Diamond said in a November 2020 interview, after winning state Senate District 35.

Diamond will replace state Sen. John Arthur Smith, who represented District 35 for 32 years. Diamond has a ranch near Beaverhead – and is finishing a four-year term on the Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools Board of Education. She also served eight years on the Sierra Soil & Water Conservation District (SSWCD) board of supervisors.

Diamond called Smith “a titan. He did a lot of good work,” she said. “I intend to call on him regularly.”

Diamond said she ran for state Senate “as a moderate New Mexican.” She described herself as pro-life, pro Second Amendment and pro-business. As a legislator, Diamond said she will “put party aside (and) vote my district.”

The legislature’s priorities for the 2021 session should be to “build reserves and be very careful how we spend our money.” Infrastructure and economic development should be spending targets, along with managing COVID-19 “so we get back on track,” she said.

Diamond said she is hopeful there will be some money available for capital outlay projects in legislative districts. But, for legislators, it would be “selfish of any of us to push an agenda until we get New Mexico in a more stable financial position.”

Diamond said her top priority for the session is families who are worried about jobs because of the pandemic.

“How do we come together and make sure we’re taking care of our families?” she said. “How do we get New Mexico back to work?”

Diamond said she supports a short January legislative session because of the pandemic, with legislators meeting only long enough to pass a feed bill and

then returning to Santa Fe in the spring when conditions are safer.

“Passing key legislation (includes) having public input,” Diamond said. “You don’t ever want to lose that.”

Diamond is no stranger to the Roundhouse. She has been a registered lobbyist, working on behalf of SSWCD and as a board member of the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association. She is also a member of the New Mexico Farm Bureau board and the NMSU Alumni Association.

More than Democrat vs. Republican, Diamond said the divide in the legislature is urban vs. rural. It’s important for rural legislators, regardless of political party, to work together, she said, to consider the impact of proposed legislation on rural New Mexico.

A rural caucus, with state Rep. Ray Lara, D-Doña Ana, serving as informal chair, has formed, Diamond said, and is a “mix of Republicans and Democrats who are reasonable people.”

Diamond said she is especially concerned that rural parts of the state don’t have a loud enough voice when it comes to decisions on education. The state public health order closing schools and mandating virtual learning, is a good example, she said, because it left some students in less populated areas of the state without access.

Child health and safety are also huge concerns, she said, especially since some children around the state “haven’t been seen or heard from in weeks” because schools are closed.

“It’s the same with health care,” Diamond said. “Basic needs are being ignored” in rural areas.

Diamond said she opposes the legalization of recreational marijuana. Rather, she said, the state should expand marijuana use for medicinal purposes. If the 2021 legislature considers legalization, it should through a “very transparent” process and should include protections for employers and a



DISTRICT 35

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Luna, Sierra, Hidalgo

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: First elected in 2020

AGE: 41

BIRTHPLACE: Nacogdoches, Texas

PROFESSION: Rancher, consultant

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in agricultural economics and agricultural business, NMSU

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Member, Truth or Consequences Municipal Schools Board of Education, 2017-20; member, Sierra Soil & Water Conservation District for eight years

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public referendum, Diamond said.

Diamond said she favors limiting the governor’s authority to issue public health orders that remain in effect without an expiration date or legislative input. The order to close New Mexico schools in March due to the pandemic, for example, came “from one office,” Diamond said, “without input from other offices.” There should have been more input before the decision was made, she said.

Diamond said she opposes taking money out of the state permanent fund to put into the state budget. “It’s not a rainy-day fund as it’s described by some progressives,” she said.



JEFF Steinborn

Keep moving New Mexico forward

DISTRICT 36

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 50

BIRTHPLACE: Las Cruces

PROFESSION: Conservationist

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in government, University of Texas at Austin; graduate course work, Institute of World Politics, Washington, D.C.

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: New Mexico House of Representatives, 2007-10 and 2013-16

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BY MIKE COOK

Meeting in person, remotely or in some kind of hybrid during the 2021 legislative session, “we still have to be ambitious to move New Mexico forward and be bold in our thinking and use technology to our advantage,” state Sen. Jeff Steinborn, D-Doña Ana, said in a Dec. 21 telephone interview.

“I’m hoping for a session where we can do big things for the state,” said Steinborn, who was re-elected to his second four-year term in the New Mexico Senate in November with 56 percent of the vote. He also served eight years in the New Mexico House of Representatives.

Steinborn said he will again introduce a local-choice energy bill during the session that would allow individual jurisdictions to purchase energy from any provider they choose to “try to break the monopoly stranglehold that our utilities have on providing New Mexico power that really binds us to higher prices and less environmentally friendly fuel sources.” Community choice would create new jobs in renewable energy generation in the area, lower energy bills and provide cleaner energy to consumers, he said.

Steinborn said he also wants “to make behavioral health services more affordable for all citizens,” adding that the services are especially important “during this stressful time. We all need mental health support,” he said. “It’s a human condition.”

Steinborn said he also will continue to press for full disclosure of all lobbying in the state. With the “new crop of idealistic senators just elected,” passing a full-disclosure bill may be possible during the session, he said, noting that one such bill was passed by the New Mexico House two years ago.

Under the bill he plans to introduce in 2021, employers of lobbyists working in New Mexico “would have to report the full amount of money paid to their lobbyists as well as report all the bills they lobby for and play a role in,” Steinborn said. “It’s one of the great blind spots in the process and it’s used to great advantage by those who try to influence us,” he said. His bill will also require everyone who lobbies legislators to disclose the positions they are taking on specific bills under consideration. This bill would be “a quantum leap forward for transparency in state government,” Steinborn said.

A high priority for the session will be legislation to provide “financial support for businesses that are strug-

gling to stay alive right now,” he said, including tax relief and unemployment insurance cost reductions, along with “more financial support for our essential workers and those that are unemployed,” Steinborn said.

“The financial health and mental health of all New Mexicans is top of the list for me as we are still in this pandemic,” he said. It’s essential that Congress continue to support ongoing stimulus in New Mexico, which is restricted in its spending by “the confines of our balanced-budget requirement,” Steinborn said.

Steinborn said he will support legislation to legalize the recreational use of marijuana in New Mexico, adding that he worked to make the bill that Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham will introduce this year better than previous legislation. The bill will allocate “a lot of money for treatment,” he said.

“I just think that’s so important,” Steinborn said, because of the scarcity of treatment for behavioral health and addiction across the state.

“That will be a priority of mine within the cannabis discussion,” he said.

Steinborn said there could be capital outlay funds available to legislators in 2021 “because our reserve fund is much higher than we thought. Our fiscal restraint over the last year has put us in a situation where we are dealing with a little new money,” he said.

Steinborn said capital outlay priorities in his district will include roads, lighting, sidewalks and parks, including a community park on city-owned land in downtown Hatch. Steinborn said he “is thrilled” that major flood-control projects have been funded in Hatch, and he will continue to seek funding for gateway signs into Hatch to guide travelers off the interstate into the town that has become internationally famous because of its chile.

WILLIAM 'BILL' Soules

Education funding likely to increase

BY MIKE COOK

What bills do you plan to introduce during the 2021 session?

I plan to introduce legislation in the area of education funding and support and renewable and sustainable energy and environment. There are also some bills with liquor law reform, and support for research at our universities.

In a Dec. 22 telephone interview, Soules said he will also seek \$6 million in funding to expand the Anna Age Eight Institute (AAEI), based at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces to serve the entire state. AAEI is leading the fight against adverse childhood experiences (ACES) like physical and sexual abuse, neglect and living in an environment of parental conflict, substance abuse and violence. An ACES score of three or higher has been found to “have devastating effects on the future health and prosperity of children,” Soules said.

What bills do you expect Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to introduce?

I think the governor will again work on passing using the permanent fund for early childhood education, common sense gun legislation and reforming some abortion bills.

Do you think the governor will introduce recreational cannabis legislation?

I do think that legalization of adult use cannabis will be introduced. I think there is a reasonable chance it will pass and I support it.

What is the state's budget priority?

We do not have the final budget numbers at this point but it appears that the money available will be similar to last year. I would like to see a greater emphasis on investments in New Mexico and New Mexicans. Education support is always a major budget issue and I hope we provide for our students and schools.

What are your capital outlay priorities for your district?

Flood control and roads on the East

Mesa are always my capital outlay priorities as well as parks and other infrastructure needs.

Do you think the entire legislative session will be held remotely?

I do not think the session will be entirely remote but will be a hybrid with committees meeting but the public not allowed except by remote. The virus will dictate much of how the session is held, but it is sure to be different from in the past.

What are your district concerns?

After concerns about the pandemic, education, environment and economics are always the biggest concerns.

What else would you like to add?

Government functions best when people are engaged with their legislators. While people hold differing opinions, I try to represent the people of my district and to make things a little better for them.

Education

Soules, who is chair of the Senate Education Committee, said the 2021 legislature likely will add 4.4 percent to the education budget over the budget that was approved during the June 202 special session.

The state is under court order to provide “educational sufficiency” to all students as a result of a state district court judge’s 2018 ruling in the Yazzie v Martinez lawsuit.

“I agree with the lawsuit,” Soules said. “We need to do better for our kids and education.” At the same time, he said, the legislature “must be careful and cautious that we aren’t wasting money. “It would be wonderful if we started providing more than sufficiency.

In addition to an increase in the amount of recurring revenue that was expected to be available to legislators during the 2021 session, Soules said there also will be a large amount of non-recurring revenue that can be used for one-time projects. Some of those funds should be used to address broad-



DISTRICT 37

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eight

AGE: 65

BIRTHPLACE: Las Cruces, N.M.

PROFESSION: Retired teacher and principal; licensed pilot

EDUCATION: Bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology; Ph.D. in education and psychology, New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Member, Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education

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band access so students can do their schoolwork remotely without having to drive around to find a hotspot. Spending \$500 million “to insure we have broadband access everywhere makes sense for the whole state,” Soules said.

Nonrecurring revenue should also be used to help public schools build vocational tech centers, Soules said, and to build advanced manufacturing centers at high schools so students can graduate with “high quality, industry-level certificates.” The money should also pay for teacher professional development.

Soules said legislators disagree with the New Mexico Public Education Department over control of some education dollars, but most of the funding is under the control of local school boards.



CARRIE Hamblen

Session will focus on health care, economic recovery, education

DISTRICT 38

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: First elected in 2020

AGE: 52

BIRTHPLACE: Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

PROFESSION: President and CEO, Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in broadcast journalism, UTEP; two master's degrees: communication studies and public administration, both from NMSU

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BY MIKE COOK

What bills do you plan to introduce in the 2021 session?

At the time of this printing, there are many conversations happening about bills that need to be introduced in the upcoming legislative session and what bills need to wait because of the importance of addressing needs due to the pandemic. At the moment, I will either sponsor or co-sponsor bills that address climate change, food insecurity and a physical therapist compact. Of course, there are other bills in discussion but won't be finalized until the week before the session.

What bills do you expect the governor to introduce in the session?

I would hope the bills the governor will introduce would address the dire circumstances our residents are experiencing because of the pandemic. Broadband internet, or the lack thereof, throughout our state is impacting every aspect of how we live: work, health, education and more. If we don't focus on improving internet access, especially in our rural communities, we will continue to be behind the rest of the country as we begin to recover from the pandemic. I also hope the governor will introduce legislation to address the criminalizing of women who seek reproductive health services.

Do you think the governor will again introduce legislation to legalize the recreational use of marijuana in the state? If so, how will you vote on legalization?

I would hope she would. We need to find other ways of diversifying our revenue in a responsible manner that benefits communities with designated tax revenues, job creation and entrepreneurial opportunities. I will vote in favor of legalization.

What are the biggest budget priorities for the session?

As we have seen since the pandemic hit our state, we have three main priorities that have surfaced; first: protecting our community with access to health care and fully supporting and equipping health care providers; second: helping our economy rebound from the shutdown; and third: making sure each and every one of our children has the tools and resources to learn remotely or safely in a hybrid learning environment. I suspect those will be the areas of focus in the upcoming legislative session.

What are the capital outlay priorities for your district?

The capital outlay priorities for District 38 will continue to be funding

important projects in our colonias, providing internet access to the rural parts of the district and working with local agencies to increase public transportation in those areas. There are also some community-specific projects that have been brought to my attention that need funding.

Do you think the 2021 session is likely to be held entirely remotely because of the pandemic? Will that impact how the legislature does its business during the session? If so, how?

We are in a very difficult position of wanting to reduce the spread of COVID but responsible for creating policy and law that address the well-being of the residents of the state. I believe the 2021 session will be more of a hybrid version, as there are some activities that need to be done in person and some that can be done remotely. This method though, reduces the public access to legislators; but I know myself and my colleagues are committed to being available for public input via zoom, telephone and email.

What are the biggest concerns in your district?

Transportation and infrastructure needs like roads, water accessibility and utilities; and now, with the pandemic, access to internet for remote learning, jobs and tele-health.

What else would you like to add?

Even though, as a community, we are experiencing some incredibly difficult hardships, I believe we will be alright. I believe we will get used to new ways of doing things but also develop more appreciation of the many things we took for granted, things like going out to eat at a restaurant or seeing a movie or even giving hugs to old friends in the grocery store. I believe we will be able to get back to that, but we must be diligent.

ELIZABETH 'LIZ' Stefanics

Sen. Liz Stefanics standing up for her counties

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

What bills do you plan to introduce in the 2021 session?

The senate is not, at this time, limiting bills and we are trying not to do memorials. I am going to have a bill for a nurse in every school district. One will focus on fresh fruit and vegetables for seniors in senior centers, children in schools and to support farmers in the state. There will be a community solar bill and a few others on amending the Energy Transition Act to restore some authority to the Public Regulation Commission. There will be one that has to do with county health councils, and I am working on a bill for the land grants and a bill for the acequias.

What bills do you expect the governor to introduce in the session?

Maybe one about the permanent fund for early childhood, and an environmental bill, but she hasn't really told us yet. I assume she has some idea on how she would like the budget to be spent.

Do you think the governor will again introduce legislation to legalize the recreational use of marijuana in the state? If so, how will you vote on legalization?

I believe she's supportive, I do think it will be introduced. I support it. It will take a while to be implemented. When you pass a bill, nothing happens for quite a long time, I see a rollout taking anywhere from 12-24 months.

What are the biggest budget priorities for the session?

The Yazzie/Martinez education lawsuit requires us to think more carefully about school systems and areas where students don't have access. If we are going to be doing virtual

learning, we have to even the playing field. Medicaid and healthcare are at the top, we have a growing number of people dependent on Medicaid. Another issue will be to support the development of more healthcare workers by providing loans and forgiveness in rural areas. We will put funds into economic development because we want people to get back to work. If businesses have ways to do things differently to keep jobs in place they will.

What are the capital outlay priorities for your district?

I cover parts of six counties, so I take in the capital requests. When we are told what is available, I try to spread out among the districts.

Do you think the 2021 session is likely to be held entirely remotely because of the pandemic?

The Senate and House are going to operate differently. The Senate goes in on the first day with floor sessions for the first week, then we go to virtual committee meetings out of our offices, then come back to floor sessions to take care of bills. I don't know how the House will do it.

What are the biggest concerns in your district?

Poverty is still number one; that equals: hunger, jobs, children being able to learn and health care. Then rural infrastructure. A lot of these small towns built water systems a long time ago. Pipes are rotting and collapsing. We have a lot of replacement needed in older, smaller communities.

What else would you like to add?

I think my role is to communicate, listen, hear the positions and needs of my constituents and see if I can assist them.



DISTRICT 39

COUNTIES SERVED: Santa Fe, San Miguel, Torrance, Valencia, Bernalillo, Lincoln

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 70

BIRTHPLACE: Dayton, Ohio

PROFESSION: Retired

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree from Eastern Kentucky University; master's degree in resources management from the University of Wisconsin; doctorate in administration and law from University of Minnesota

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Four years in the New Mexico Senate; eight years on the Santa Fe County commission

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Legislature welcomes new senators, representatives

BY MIKE COOK

The New Mexico State Senate welcomes 11 new members into the 42-member body during the 2021 session, while the 70-member state House of Representatives will have 10 new members.

With the new memberships, the Senate will have 27 Democrats (an increase of one from 2020) and 15 Republicans. The House will have 44 Democrats (a decrease of two), 25 Republicans (an increase of one) and a new independent.

New members in the state Senate are former House member David M. Gallegos, replacing Greg Fulfer in District 41 (Eddy and Lea counties), both are Republicans; Democrat Katy M. Duhigg replacing Republican Candace Gould in District 10 (Bernalillo and Sandoval counties); Leo Jaramillo replacing Richard Martinez in District 5 (Santa Fe, Sandoval, Los Alamos and Rio Arriba counties), both are Democrats; Carrie Hamblen replacing Mary Kay Papen (who had been president pro tempore of the Senate) in District 38 (Doña Ana County),

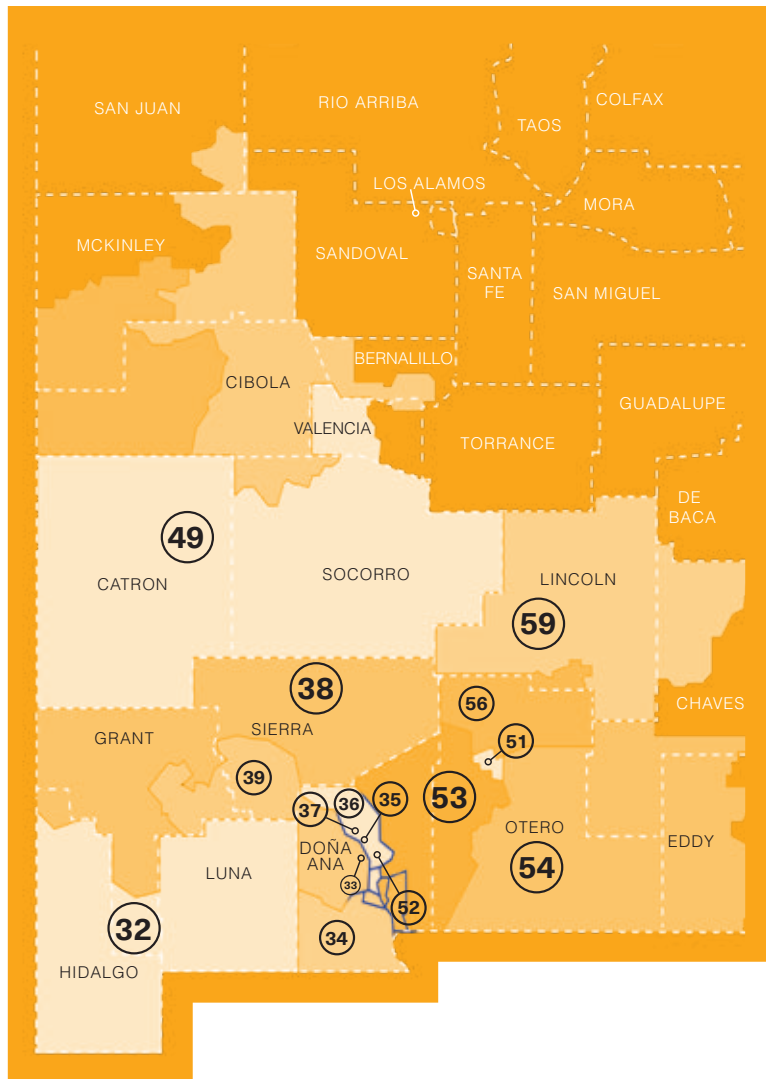
both are Democrats; Democrat Martin E. Hickey replacing Republican William Payne in District 20 (Bernalillo County); Siah Correa Hemphill replacing Gabriel Ramos in District 28 (Catron, Grant and Socorro counties), both are Democrats; Democrat Harold J. Pope replacing Republican Sander Rue in District 23 (Bernalillo County); Republican Joshua A. Sanchez replacing Democrat Clemente Sanchez in District 30 (Cibola, Socorro, McKinley and Valencia counties); Brenda Grace McKenna replacing John Sapien in District 9 (Bernalillo and Sandoval counties), both are Democrats; Republican Crystal Diamond replacing John Arthur Smith (32-year Senate member and chair of the Senate Finance Committee) in District 35 (Luna, Hidalgo, Sierra and Grant counties); and former House member Greg W. Schmedes replacing James White in District 19 (Bernalillo, Sandoval, Santa Fe and Torrance counties), both are Republicans.

On the House side, Meredith A. Dixon will replace Abbas Akhil in District, both are

Democrats; T. Ryan Lane will replace Paul C. Bandy in District, both are republicans; Kristine Ortez will replace Dan Barrone in District 20 (Bernalillo County), both are Democrats; Randall t. Pettigrew will replace David Gallegos in District 61 (Lea County), both are Republicans; Joshua N. Hernandez will replace Tim D. Lewis in District 60 (Sandoval County), both are Republicans; Republican Luis M. Terrazas will replace Democrat Rodolpho “Rudy” Martinez in District 39 (Grant, Sierra, Doña Ana); independent Brittney A. Barreras will replace Democrat Art De La Cruz in District 12 (Bernalillo County); Ambrose M. Castellano will replace Tomas Salazar in District 70 (San Miguel, Santa Fe and Torrance counties), both are Democrats; Roger E. Montoya will replace Joseph Sanchez in District 40 (Colfax, Mora, Rio Arriba and San Miguel counties), both are Democrats; and Stefani Lord will replace Greg Schmedes in District 22 (Bernalillo, Sandoval and Santa Fe counties); both are Republicans.

REPRESENTATIVE NUMERICAL LIST

- 1 RODNEY MONTOYA
- 2 JAMES R.J. STRICKLER
- 3 T. RYAN LANE
- 4 ANTHONY ALLISON
- 5 DOREEN WONDA JOHNSON
- 6 ELISEO LEE ALCON
- 7 KELLY FAJARDO
- 8 ALONZO BALDONADO
- 9 PATRICIA LUNDSTROM
- 10 ANDRES ROMERO
- 11 JAVIER MARTINEZ
- 12 BRITTNEY A. BARRERAS
- 13 PATRICIA ROYBAL CABALLERO
- 14 MIGUEL GARCIA
- 15 DAYAN HOCHMAN-VIGIL
- 16 ANTONIO "MOE" MAESTAS
- 17 DEBORAH ARMSTRONG
- 18 GAIL CHASEY
- 19 SHERYL WILLIAMS STAPLETON
- 20 MEREDITH A. DIXON
- 21 DEBRA SARINANA
- 22 STEFANI LORD
- 23 DAYMON ELY
- 24 ELIZABETH THOMSON
- 25 CHRISTINE TRUJILLO
- 26 GEORGENE LOUIS
- 27 MARIAN MATTHEWS
- 28 MELANIE ANN STANSBURY
- 29 JOY GARRATT
- 30 NATALIE FIGUEROA
- 31 WILLIAM REHM
- 32 CANDIE SWEETSER
- 33 MICAELA LARA CADENA
- 34 RAYMUNDO LARA
- 35 ANGELICA RUBIO
- 36 NATHAN SMALL
- 37 JOANNE FERRARY
- 38 REBECCA DOW
- 39 LUIS M. TERRAZAS
- 40 ROGER E. MONTOYA
- 41 SUSAN HERRERA
- 42 KRISTINA ORTEZ
- 43 CHRISTINE CHANDLER
- 44 JANE POWDRELL-CULBERT
- 45 LINDA M. SERRATO
- 46 ANDREA ROMERO
- 47 BRIAN EGOLF JR.
- 48 TARA L. LUJAN
- 49 GAIL "MISSY" ARMSTRONG
- 50 MATTHEW MCQUEEN
- 51 RACHEL BLACK
- 52 DOREEN GALLEGOS
- 53 WILLIE MADRID
- 54 JAMES TOWNSEND
- 55 CATHRYNN BROWN
- 56 ZACHARY COOK
- 57 JASON CARL HARPER
- 58 CANDY SPENCE EZZELL
- 59 GREG NIBERT
- 60 JOSHUA N. HERNANDEZ
- 61 RANDALL T. PETTIGREW
- 62 LARRY SCOTT
- 63 MARTIN RUBEN ZAMORA
- 64 RANDAL CROWDER
- 65 DERRICK LENTE
- 66 PHELPS ANDERSON
- 67 JACKY CHATFIELD
- 68 KAREN BASH
- 69 HARRY GARCIA
- 70 AMBROSE M. CASTELLANO



SOUTHWEST NEW MEXICO
House
 DISTRICT MAP



REPRESENTATIVE PROFILES



DISTRICT 32
Candie Sweetser
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DISTRICT 35
Angelica Rubio
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DISTRICT 38
Rebecca Dow
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DISTRICT 51
Rachel Black
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DISTRICT 54
James Townsend
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DISTRICT 33
Micaela Lara Cadena
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DISTRICT 36
Nathan Small
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DISTRICT 39
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DISTRICT 52
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DISTRICT 56
Zachary Cook
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DISTRICT 34
Raymundo Lara
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DISTRICT 37
Joanne Ferrary
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DISTRICT 49
Gail Armstrong
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DISTRICT 53
Willie Madrid
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DISTRICT 59
Greg Nibert
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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

Brian Egolf, D-Santa Fe County
(must be voted on by full Senate)

MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Sheryl Williams Stapleton, D-Bernalillo County

MINORITY FLOOR LEADER

James G. Townsend, R-Chaves, Eddy and Otero counties

Speaker to be voted in during the session. To reach your legislator during the session, call 505-986-4300.

MAJORITY WHIP

Doreen Gallegos, D-Doña Ana County

MINORITY WHIP

Rodney D. Montoya, R-San Juan County





DISTRICT 32

CANDIE G. Sweetser

Representative plans to continue serving rural district

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Candie Sweetser, who represents House District 32 (Grant, Hidalgo and Luna counties), has said the biggest concern in her district is high unemployment

“Hopefully we’ll be able to fund some economic development initiatives on the statewide level that will trickle down and help rural New Mexico,” she said. “My district is completely rural, so my area of focus is what is going to help rural New Mexico bring in jobs, sustain jobs and help with quality of life.”

One proposal that seems likely to make it to the governor’s desk when the state

Legislature convenes in January, is a bill authorizing recreational use and sales of marijuana.

A task force appointed by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham published recommendations for cannabis use based on other states experiences with regulating recreational marijuana markets, paving the way for a legalization bill.

But Sweetser said, in her border district, marijuana creates a tremendous amount of issues for local law enforcement and so until it is legalized federally it is likely she will always oppose it.

Sweetser, reelected in the 2020 elec-

COUNTIES SERVED:

Luna, Hidalgo, Grant

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Five

AGE: 58

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, N.M.

PROFESSION: Managing partner at Luna County Broadcasting Company

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s degree in radio/television broadcasting from Eastern New Mexico University, master’s degree in communication studies from New Mexico State University

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tion, said “My one and only reason to run has been to replenish this rural, moderate district, and I have done that to the best of my ability.”



DISTRICT 51

RACHEL Black

Rep. Black enters third legislative session

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

State Rep. Rachel Black, a Republican, represents New Mexico House District 51, which is located entirely within Otero County and includes Alamogordo. Black won the seat in 2018. She was unopposed in that year’s Republican primary and defeated Democrat Jeff Swanson in the general election, earning more than 64 percent of the vote. The seat had previously been held by Yvette Harrell, who gave it up to run for Congress in 2018 and again in 2020 when she won the seat.

Black has served as a member of the House Local Government, Land Grants and Cultural Affairs Committee; Labor, Veterans’ and Military Affairs Committee;

and Enrolling and Engrossing Committee, as well as these interim committees: Military and Veterans Affairs, Land Grant, Legislative Health and Human Services and Mortgage Finance Authority Act Oversight.

A bill Black introduced during the 2019 legislative session to promote programs to support women in the oil and gas industry passed both houses of the legislature unanimously but was vetoed by Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

Black lives in Alamogordo and is the chief deputy county treasurer for Otero County. She describes herself as a conservative Republican and is the former secre-

COUNTIES SERVED: Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Three

AGE: 48

BIRTHPLACE: Langley Air Force Base, Hampton, Virginia; grew up in Alamogordo

PROFESSION: Chief deputy county treasurer of Otero County

EDUCATION: High school graduate, some college

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Former secretary-treasurer of the Republican Women of Otero County

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tary-treasurer of the Republican Women of Otero County.

Black has said she is concerned that the gating criteria set by the governor in relation to Covid-19 could be too high for any county to reach.

MICAELA LARA Cadena

Health care, public safety top 2021 agenda

BY MIKE COOK

“The health, safety and well-being of families is at the top of the list,” for the 2021 legislative session, State Rep. Micaela Lara Cadena said in a December. Legislators need to “consider what families need to survive COVID in a practical sense,” including staying safe at home, having jobs and getting their children back in school, said Cadena, who has a professional background in health care policy and public safety.

Cadena said she will support legislation in 2021 to “repeal a dangerous and antiquated 1969 bill that brings criminal penalties to abortion.” She also is working with the New Mexico Professional Firefighters Association to introduce legislation to expand workers compensation eligibility for firefighters that recognizes exposure to global pandemics like COVID-19.

Cadena said she was the House floor sponsor during the June 2020 special session of state Sen. Joseph Cervantes’ (D-Doña Ana) bill requiring law enforcement officers to use body-worn cameras while on duty, and said there is more work to do regarding enforcement and the funding and resources to implement that new law.

Cadena said the “culture around policing all goes back to one place in New Mexico, and that’s the (state) Law Enforcement Academy” (NMLEA) and its governing board. That’s where the curriculum is set, she said, and certification, accountability, oversight and discipline happen.

“We need to break some of that up,” Cadena said. It is a “conflict of interest to have the same people responsible for all those areas of public safety.”

“I want to see us get going on how we could use the potential of the NMLEA to create cultures of policing that our communities deserve,” Cadena said.

Cadena said she likely will introduce

legislation during the session “that changes the habitual offender enhancement as it relates to simple possession.” The enhancement doesn’t solve offenders’ addiction issues – “health care problems require health care solutions,” Cadena said, “it wastes money and doesn’t make communities safe.”

The enhancement should be removed completely for crimes of simple possession, she said, and judges should be given discretion as to whether or not it is applied to other crimes. The state, Cadena said, needs to “move toward individualized sentencing.” With the offender in front of them, judges should make decisions about sentencing that “improve public safety for the state and consider what is happening in the offender’s life,” she said.

Cadena said she had not yet seen the legislation that likely will come forward to legalize recreational marijuana. “There’s a very strong chance,” that it will become law, she said.

Decriminalization is a priority for Cadena. “Fundamentally, I trust people to make their own decisions with their bodies and life,” she said. “I am philosophically open and supportive of recreational marijuana.”

One concern she has is “when someone is using and driving,” Cadena said. “I get nervous about people who are not sober and are on the road.” As part of legalizing recreational cannabis, she said, the state must “figure out a testing mechanism so we can measure and account for someone’s sobriety when they get behind the wheel.” Workplace conditions should also be considered, she said, because it is a reasonable expectation that employees show up for their jobs “clear minded and sober.”

Making sure New Mexico Medicaid is fully funded will be a top priority for the legislature during the session, Cadena said, and so will funding for



DISTRICT 33

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 38

BIRTHPLACE: Born in El Paso; raised in Mesilla, N.M.

PROFESSION: Research director at Bold Futures NM nonprofit

EDUCATION: Bachelor’s in international studies, Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut; master’s in community and regional planning, University of New Mexico

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education. Cadena said she will look for resources during the session to pay for i-Pads for public school students.

If capital outlay funds are available to legislators in 2021, Cadena said her funding priorities will include water and sewer and other long-term infrastructure needs in her district.

Cadena said she is staying in touch with House leadership about how the 2021 session will be conducted “to make sure that we are not compromising the health and safety and wellness of the staff, of the people that come into the session and certainly not the communities we represent back home.”

If committee hearings and floor sessions are virtual during the session, it could benefit residents who live far away from Santa Fe.



DISTRICT 34

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 50

BIRTHPLACE: El Paso, Texas; grew up in Anthony

PROFESSION: Coordinator for Instructional Resources, Gadsden Independent School District

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in English, New Mexico State University

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BY MIKE COOK

State Rep. Raymundo “Ray” Lara of Chamberino, defeated incumbent Bill Gomez in both the 2018 and 2020 Democratic primaries in the race for New Mexico House District 34. Lara defeated Republican Dawn Ladd 66-34 percent in the November 2020 general election.

During the 2021 legislative session, Lara said he plans to introduce bills to help keep homeless and foster youth in school. Under current disciplinary practice, he said, it's too easy for them to be kicked out of school for

RAYMUNDO ‘RAY’

Lara

Lara excited to begin his second House term

disciplinary reasons when school may be only place where they receive love and support.

Lara said he also plans to introduce legislation to ensure that public notices are printed in both English and Spanish and are published in both English and Spanish media. That's necessary, Lara said, because many Spanish literate people don't read English-language media, but are entitled to receive the same information as those who do.

Lara said he supports “responsible legislation” to make recreational marijuana legal in New Mexico.

“I think it's very exciting,” he said, because the industry would provide an important addition to the state's tax base. In creating the new industry, it's important that the state provide for “the little guys,” Lara said, “the mom-and-pop growers and businesses that are going to pop up,” in addition to the large companies that will produce cannabis for recreational use.

Lara said he wants to spend more time studying a civil rights bill that likely will be on Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham's 2021 legislative call. The bill could limit police officers' qualified immunity and Lara said he wants to make sure the bill would not produce unintended consequences and frivolous lawsuits. Law enforcement leaders he has spoken with are concerned about the legislation because it could open the door to lawsuits against individual officers, he said.

Lara said he is hopeful there will be capital outlay funding available during the session. “A lot of projects depend on those funds,” he said. In particular, there is a road project in Mesquite that he “really wants to get started,” along with a water technology project at the industrial part in Santa Teresa and arroyo flooding issues in Santa Teresa, Lara said.

“I'm very happy with what I'm seeing out of Santa Teresa,” Lara said. “That area in general is ripe for development, for growth for prosperity.” Because of the growth of business and industry in Santa Teresa, he said, there is a need for more housing that must be addressed.

Lara serves as informal chair of a bipartisan caucus of rural legislators that began meeting during last year's 30-day session to prioritize needs, review the impact of potential legislation on rural areas and consider a wide range of needs and concerns, including water, private property, broadband access, utilities and infrastructure, he said.

Lara said he is hopeful of getting a seat on the House Finance and Appropriations Committee in 2021, succeeding state Rep. Rodolpho “Rudy” Martinez, a Silver City Democrat,” as a southern New Mexico representative on that powerful committee.

If he gets a seat on House Appropriations, Lara said he likely will be in Santa Fe for the entire 60-day session in 2021. Other committees probably will be able to meet virtually, he said. Lara said he liked worked from his office in Santa Fe during the June 2020 special session, and found a lot more constituents “reaching out via email” during the second, one-day special session in September.

The virtual access that people have to legislative committees and floor sessions will open the legislature to more public interaction, he said, and give access to people who live far from Santa Fe, including many of his constituents.

“This way, you can stay at home and watch it on the computer and still give your input,” Lara said.

“I'm excited to start my second term,” he said. “I've learned a lot ... built relationships. I'll be able to put myself in those positions that will benefit my constituents the best.”

ANGELICA Rubio

Economic diversity is essential

BY MIKE COOK

What bills do you plan to introduce in 2021? As the legislative leadership finalizes plans for how the 2021 legislative session will be handled, it is unclear if the number of legislative bills will be limited per legislator. At this point, and this may change, I will be introducing the following: legislation to address economic diversification, specific to how we transition and support workers and communities; paid sick leave; housing omnibus bill to address the housing crisis in New Mexico; broadband (access); healthy food financing initiative; legislation that begins to end our dependence on private prisons.

What bills do you expect the governor to introduce in the session?

My hope is that we can continue to address the housing crisis. New Mexico was already facing a housing crisis prior to COVID-19, and the pandemic has impacted families in many different ways. When you order a stay at home, and you are at risk of losing your shelter, it doesn't make any sense to evict families. Secondly, I believe that a post-COVID recovery plan will be in place, specifically to support workers, small business entrepreneurs and addressing issues of broadband – enhancing and expanding on what we did the past two special sessions.

Do you think the governor will introduce legislation to legalize recreational marijuana? If so, how will you vote?

I absolutely believe that we should be legalizing recreational cannabis, as long as there is a restorative justice plan in place to address those who were convicted in the past, and providing equitable opportunities for smaller entrepreneurs of color. As someone that is also working on ideas to diversify our economy in New Mexico, this is one step forward in doing so.

What are the biggest budget priori-

ties for the session?

Post-COVID19 recovery; addressing small entrepreneurs, specifically, those that are less connected to resources; providing workers the mechanisms they need to work in healthy and clean environments. Most importantly though, is housing. We need to keep our neighbors from losing their shelter. Furthermore, and more importantly, it is very clear that the oil and gas industry is not going to recover in ways that it has done in the past. The legislature must begin to make plans on how to better address a future without extractive industries, and in doing so, legislation that I am planning to introduce to address this, should be the first steps in moving us towards this process.

What are the capital outlay priorities for your district?

I do not believe that there will be much funding for capital projects during this upcoming session. However, I will be prioritizing projects that improve access to the outdoors for young people, in addition to making sure traditional neighborhoods have the infrastructure necessary to improve quality of life.

Do you think the 2021 session is likely to be held entirely remotely?

The House Democratic Caucus is taking this public health issue very seriously. Legislators are advocating for 100 percent virtual.

Having conducted the special session virtually, there were some very minor hiccups that we were able to overcome. One concern is the timeliness of getting last-minute amendments online ASAP. This is an example of what will be worked on between now and the regular session, and I believe that we can make it work for everyone, including the public. This is a very different situation for everyone, and this year has required many of us to adapt. I believe that the legislature has the staff and



DISTRICT 35

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 41

BIRTHPLACE: Roswell, N.M.
(grew up in nearby Lake Arthur)

PROFESSION: Consultant

EDUCATION: B.A., Government, New Mexico State University; M.A. Latin American Studies, California State University Los Angeles

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team to make it a successful one, and legislators like myself will certainly do what we can to help the possibilities.

What are the concerns in your district?

We must address the issues that small, locally owned family businesses are confronting, especially those with little to no access to resources, capital, political influence. We must prioritize low-income renters/homeowners that will need funding to help families and individuals remain in their homes and help to further minimize an ongoing housing crisis. Finally, I will continue to support youth-related programming and recreation, for example addressing the Boys & Girls Club facility, city park facilities, summer and fall activities post-COVID19.



DISTRICT 36

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 37

BIRTHPLACE: Albuquerque, N.M.

PROFESSION: Conservationist

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:
Las Cruces City Council member

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degrees in English, philosophy, College of Wooster, Wooster, Ohio

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BY MIKE COOK

“I do look forward to playing an important role in key legislative areas representing House District 36,” state Rep. Nathan Small, D-Doña Ana, said in a Dec. 18 telephone interview, “with education, jobs, health care and infrastructure always being at the very top of the list and guiding our work.”

“My most important role is serving on the (House) Appropriations and Finance Committee, where the budget is built,” said Small, who begins his third two-year term in January 2021.

“I am so proud to get to fight for our shared priorities when it comes to keeping our children and educators safe, addressing the enormous and ever-growing challenges of

NATHAN Small

Education, COVID-19 recovery top agenda

the pandemic, limitations on in-class learning and the need for expansion of broadband and other infrastructure to serve not only as we continue to fight COVID-19, but even after so that we can make up for lost time,” he said.

Small said he is “looking to educators, to families and to kids in our community for guidance, and I certainly intend to fight for the strongest possible education budget.”

Supporting farmers, farm workers and expanding support for value-added agriculture is another priority.

“We are internationally known for our agricultural products,” he said.

Small said he is also proud to have sponsored legislation “maximizing our use of renewable energy and the transmission needed to get that energy to market. As we see the cost of renewable energy drop, we will have even more economic opportunity to serve other markets and serve economic diversification,” he said, adding that the development of hydrogen could be another “massive opportunity” for the state.

New Mexico also must “double down our support for international trade, for Santa Teresa and the myriad opportunities it creates across agriculture and manufacturing,” Small said. Protecting New Mexico’s water is another priority, he said, which includes supporting continued water research at NMSU.

A top legislative priority during the 2021 session must be dealing with COVID-19, Small said.

“I am reminded every day that recovery is first and foremost,” he said.

Small businesses, “including and perhaps especially within retail, restaurants, entertainment, have been hit extraordinarily hard,” Small said.

Hundreds of millions of dollars in state and federal funding have been allocated for their relief, Small said, but “we have more work to do there, including to fine tune eligibility to ensure all who need the funds are eligible.”

The state has seen a “significant

increase in Medicaid usage” since the onset of COVID-19, he said, with “a very generous federal match that’s been increased during the pandemic.” But there is still “some state financial responsibility,” Small said, and he plans to “fight to make sure folks have the critical health care they need to fight COVID and to roll out the vaccine safely, efficiently and effectively.”

There also will be “a large amount of care that that has been deferred during the pandemic, which our New Mexico residents will need,” Small said, including behavioral health services and the “potentially devastating effect of COVID-19 and the isolation, economic and educational challenges and others that have arisen.”

Continuing “community infrastructure work that he and other legislators have begun funding throughout the county will be a priority for 2021 capital outlay funds, Small said, including flood control and expanding broadband access, street paving, utilities and other infrastructure needs “for now and especially for the future.”

Small said he also wants to increase hunting opportunities for residents of New Mexico, which trails other western states in the percentage of hunting tags allocated to residents vs non-residents.

“We’re making it harder for families to go hunting, to pass on these important traditions” Small said.

Better management and safeguarding of non-wildlife is also important, he said, as part of the state’s vast biodiversity and opportunities to enhance its outdoor economy.

Construction of “large, new clean energy projects, primarily wind, has brought additional gross receipts tax revenues to the state, which has also seen “a consistent improvement in oil prices,” he said. As a result, New Mexico’s budget is in better shape than “what we feared in May and June,” Small said.

■ SMALL CONTINUED ON PAGE 47

JOANNE J. Ferrary

Education, health care, jobs, dealing with COVID-19 top legislative agenda

BY MIKE COOK

Joanne Ferrary was first elected to represent New Mexico House district 37 in 2016, defeating incumbent Republican Terry McMillian 53-47 percent in her third race against McMillian. She defeated Bev Courtney in the 2018 general election, earning 60 percent of the vote. Ferrary defeated Republican Doña Ana County Commissioner Isabella Solis in 2020, 54-46 percent.

Ferrary is vice chair of the House Health and Human Services Committee and is also a member of the House Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee. She is chair of the interim Disabilities Concerns Subcommittee and a member of five other interim subcommittees.

What bills do you plan to introduce during the 2021 legislative session?

The bills I plan to introduce in the 2021 session will include repeal of the abortion ban, changes to the Tobacco Products Act, a food hunger bill, an anti-hazing Bill, constitutional green amendment and guardianship and supported decision making.

What bills do you expect Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to introduce?

The governor is likely to introduce a bill for climate change, a civil rights act and a constitutional amendment for use of the land grant permanent fund for early childhood education.

Do you think the governor will introduce recreational marijuana legislation?

Yes, I think the governor will support legislation to legalize recreational use of marijuana. I also support it because, with legalization and regulation, people will not be criminalized and jailed for possession. It will also mean that underage youth are less likely to gain

access with stricter regulation.

What will be the spending priorities during the 2021 legislature?

The biggest budget priorities for the session will definitely include education and health care.

What are your capital outlay priorities for your district?

Capital outlay priorities for House District 37 include continuing efforts for flood control on the East Mesa as well as road development and upkeep, infrastructure for the East Mesa Recreation Center as well as the soccer fields and a skatepark.

Do you think the session will be held entirely remotely?

The 2021 legislative session is likely to be held remotely after we are sworn in Jan. 19 and then vote for rule changes to allow remote attendance. Transparency is assured as we will have virtual meetings by Zoom for committees as well as floor sessions. Public comment will be given by Zoom as well as communications set up for contacting legislators directly.

What at the biggest concerns in your district?

Concerns I've found in District 37 during the pandemic are to have supported unemployment, food security, improving the economy, support for our teachers and students during the pandemic and having affordable health care.

What else would like to add?

I encourage everyone to continue to stay home as much as possible, to properly wear their masks and to socially distance at all times in public. We will soon start having COVID-19 vaccines available and until then we need to continue our vigilance and safety precautions.



DISTRICT 37

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 67

BIRTHPLACE: Canton, Ohio

PROFESSION: Retired Planner Director

EDUCATION: Bachelor's in individual studies, master's in business administration, both New Mexico State University

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REBECCA Dow

Working to build on regional opportunities

She cited the mining industry – “My district is full of copper, gold, uranium, magnesium and silver, but there hasn’t been a new mine approved since 1982.”

And she cited Spaceport America. “People don’t realize the spaceport is 65 percent privately funded,” Dow said. “At the same time, since we built the spaceport, the industry has grown from \$250 billion to \$500 billion. The more we are attractive to private business, especially research and development, the better the space industry in New Mexico is going to do. Virgin Galactic is just one of many out there.”

She mentioned AeroVironment, another space-related company that does work at Spaceport America.

One of their projects, Dow said, is a 300-foot glider drone, with wings covered in solar panels, that hovers sub-orbitally and distributes 5G for up to six months.

“It’s cheaper than broadband, and shows were in a real race to space,” Dow said. “AeroVironment is happy with their agreement with Spaceport America and White Sands Missile Range. They’re looking to expand and manufacture here.”

Dow added that more than two dozen different companies are looking at Spaceport America, and the state needs to reduce regulatory obstacles that may send companies to look at other states, many of which now have spaceports; states that don’t offer the many logistical advantages New Mexico does.

Another agricultural opportunity exists in regard to meat inspection. To that end, Dow is joining with three other House members to present a bipartisan bill that would allow more inspections in New Mexico.

“There is no inspection at the level we need,” she said. “80 percent of the meat produced here goes out of state to be processed.” Again, Dow said, it is regulations that get in the way. The bill she plans to introduce with Rep. Gail Armstrong, R-49; Moe Maestas, D-16;

and G. Andres. Romero, D-10; would eliminate some of the red tape, and grow the number of meat inspectors from the current two USDA inspectors. Estimates show the need is for 17, Dow said, adding, “the federal government is not going to give us any more.”

Dow said, if passed, the bill could “save local ranchers, creating new opportunities for economic growth for producers of pork, poultry and beef. I expect processors to open in Sierra and Socorro counties if we get it passed.”

Another bill Dow plans to introduce would expand services allowed for physician’s assistants. This is particularly important for rural areas of the state that have a severe shortage of doctors, she said.

Children’s protective services is in dire need of reforms at the Children, Youth and Families Department level, Dow said, particularly in the area of mental health. She plans to introduce a bill that would address this issue and make mental health a critical component.

As it is every session, the budget will be a key part of the 2021 legislature.

“My biggest priority is to not grow the budget,” Dow said. “Isn’t it ironic that Covid backfilled our \$2 billion deficit? The government money literally saved us from a \$2 billion loss. Those federal dollars are not lasting forever. When we go back to recovery, our gross receipts tax will be smaller, and we need to not grow government to the size of the budget. We should prioritize economic recovery, deregulation to help businesses recover, and be intentional about education spending.”

Recent trends decreasing spending for smaller schools need to be reversed, Dow said.

“Cliff (school) exists because there are producers putting food on our tables,” she said. “I believe the legislature was targeting charter schools when they eliminated the small school funding

DISTRICT 38

COUNTIES SERVED: Grant, Hidalgo, Sierra

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 46

BIRTHPLACE: Cushing, Oklahoma

PROFESSION: Nonprofit CEO

EDUCATION: Associate’s degree in early childhood education, bachelor’s degree in business administration, Oral Roberts University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: No elected office, but has served on local, state and national boards

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BY RICHARD COLTHARP

Rebecca Dow represents Sierra, Grant and Hidalgo counties, but many of the activities in her district involve federal oversight out of her control.

“Every opportunity we have is dependent on appropriate regulations,” Dow said.

She cited agriculture, which for most area farmers and ranchers, relies in varying degrees on leases of land from the Bureau of Land Management, the National Forest Service or other federal entities.

She cited Elephant Butte, which is affected by the Bureau of Reclamation’s and other federal and jurisdictional oversight.

■ DOW CONTINUED ON PAGE 47

LUIS Terrazas

Jobs, tax reform, broadband access, small business, ag are top issues

BY MIKE COOK

What bills do you plan to introduce in 2021?

There are still many unknowns; for one, the speaker limiting the number of bills we will be able to introduce. In general, I will support legislation that helps people get back to work; comprehensive tax reform, such as Social Security income exemption; broadband internet for rural areas; support small business and agriculture.

What bills do you expect the governor to introduce in the session?

I cannot speak on behalf of the governor. Although the governor has expressed a commitment to champion and support much needed in-state meat inspections. She's been consistent in her support of unlimited abortion on demand. She intends on passing an abortion bill that allows abortion up to the ninth month and strips a doctor or nurse's right of whether or not they want to participate in an abortion – otherwise known as the conscience clause. Those are things I have heard or read about but I personally have not had a conversation with the governor.

Do you think the governor will again introduce legislation to legalize the recreational use of marijuana? If so, how will you vote on legalization?

Again I cannot speak on behalf of the governor. I am in support of medical marijuana. However, I have questions/concerns about many aspects of legalizing marijuana for recreational use. The questions and concerns are, where and how will the sales be deposited? Who and how will we license growers and sellers? Does law enforcement have the training and equipment to measure

a person when under the influence? I have concerns about second-hand smoke to the public, especially children.

What are the capital outlay priorities for your district?

My district covers three counties: Doña Ana, Sierra and Grant. The needs are great in those areas. I am looking forward to consolidating my efforts with other legislators to leverage as much support for our counties as possible. There are drainage issues, school improvements, hospital improvements, handicap accessibility and compliance issues, maintenance and municipality projects. There are literally tens of millions of dollars in requests and I will be tasked with appealing for and delegating these requested funds on an extremely limited budget.

Do you think the 2021 session is likely to be entirely held remotely because of the pandemic? There are many discussions about how to handle the session during this difficult time. No definitive decision has been made. I believe our state has the capacity to allow the legislature to convene in Santa Fe. First responders and firefighters do not have a choice. I believe the legislators and the public will follow social distancing practices for a safe session. We need to do our jobs as public servants. It is felt by some that Zoom meetings are more economical for public participants because they do not have to drive, buy meals, etc. Folks in Santa Fe and Albuquerque have better access to broadband than rural areas. Not only to broadband but a broadband/internet that can withstand the increase in traffic. Rural areas are already experiencing



DISTRICT 39

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Grant, Sierra

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: First elected in 2020

AGE: 48

BIRTHPLACE: Silver City, N.M.

PROFESSION: Owner, Terrazas Funeral Chapels

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issues because of the number of users attending school. Having a virtual session also denies the legislators working with one another because of the great disconnect of working from home and access to the public, the way true legislation was meant to be.

What are the concerns in your district?

Possible budget cuts. Small businesses reopening, people need to get back to work. A high failure rate of children with remote learning and the need for broadband because of poor internet in some of our rural areas. I would like to see children go back to school as soon as possible. I have concerns about the children's mental, physical, emotional health and well-being from being isolated for so long.



GAIL 'MISSY' Armstrong

Armstrong works to wrangle large district

"Years ago, we had a New Mexico meat inspector program," Armstrong said. "But now there are only two USDA inspectors in the whole state. If we bring back New Mexico meat inspection, it could help grow our economy and people could open more processing plants. The meat issues we had early in the pandemic were not due to a lack of meat, but a lack of processing. There are only five major processors across the U.S. If the cattle are born and raised in New Mexico, we should have a way to sell them. It's just red tape."

Armstrong also hopes to introduce a bill to assist the state's volunteer fire departments. Currently, she said, if funds aren't used after a certain time, they go back to the state's general fund. Fires don't follow timelines, and neither does firefighting work. Armstrong believes the bill would protect the sustainability of volunteer departments.

Many New Mexico counties and municipalities rely on Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funds from the federal government. These funds compensate communities that have federal government lands, such as military bases, national parks or national forests. In theory, the government fills in the gap from what the communities would have received in taxes if the property were privately owned.

"It was supposed to be at least what property taxes are in the area, but they've been paying way less," said Armstrong, who plans to bring up a bill that would have a third-party vendor look at PILT in New Mexico and work toward getting the state its fair share. It has worked in other states, she said.

Together with Rep. Doreen Gallegos, Armstrong plans to bring a bill expanding capabilities for nurse practitioners,

who are often the only medical professionals in some of the state's farther outposts.

"For rural New Mexico, it's a real issue," Armstrong said.

Another key issue in rural New Mexico is broadband access to the Internet.

Among other legislation expected to be presented, Armstrong said, "Broadband is going to be huge. But there are so many different bills. I'm leaning toward signing onto (Sen.) Michael Padilla's, but I want to help however I can. Because in my area, we have places we don't have cell phones, much less broadband. The pandemic has taught us we can do a lot online, if we're able to get online."

At the time of this interview, Armstrong was still reviewing capital outlay requests in her district, but she also expressed frustration at the capital outlay system.

"I represent the largest district in the state on the House side," she said. "There's only one senator and one rep for Socorro, meaning New Mexico Tech has only one rep and one senator. Because (the University of New Mexico) has so many reps and senators in its district, their money goes so much further. And some things I do get in with capital outlay have gotten line-item vetoed. One was a senior center in Belen."

Another bill expected to come up is the legalization of recreational marijuana, an issue that seems to create more questions than answers.

"My personal opinion is, I'll vote for it, as long as it's managed properly," Armstrong said. "We need to do it right, but I don't know what right is. I really wish they'd legalize it at the federal level. Then the states wouldn't have to figure it out individually."

DISTRICT 49

COUNTIES SERVED: Catron, Socorro, Valencia

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 53

BIRTHPLACE: Socorro County

PROFESSION: Rancher and businesswoman

EDUCATION: High school, some college

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BY RICHARD COLTHARP

The cattle industry has a long, rich history in Magdalena, New Mexico. Millions of pounds of beef passed through the town's Stock Driveway, brought by rail or cowboy-led cattle drives.

Rep. Gail Armstrong is entering her third term representing Socorro, Catron and part of Valencia counties. It is the geographically largest House district in the state and includes Magdalena, which she calls home.

If one of her bills gains traction, she could bring cattle work back to Magdalena and elsewhere in New Mexico.

DOREEN Gallegos

Gallegos is senior member of county's House delegation

BY MIKE COOK

With her re-election in New Mexico House of Representatives District 52 in November, state Rep. Doreen Gallegos, a Las Cruces Democrat, will become the senior member of the Doña Ana County House delegation when the 2021 legislature convenes.

Gallegos, 52, won a fifth two-year term in the House with 65 percent of the vote, and was re-elected by fellow House Democrats as House majority whip – the only member of the 2021 leadership in either the House or the Senate from southern New Mexico.

While many things about the 2021 legislative session are uncertain because of the pandemic and state public health orders, Gallegos said the 60-day session needs to move forward as planned, with legislators either meeting safely in person or remotely.

“Our constituents have made hard choices and we need to govern,” Gallegos said. “We need to make sure that there’s services and money and make sure we’re working for the state of New Mexico and our families. If we don’t take care of things, New Mexicans suffer.”

Gallegos said she does not favor holding a short session in January, with legislators meeting only long enough to pass a budget and then adjourning until later in the spring when state public health orders could be relaxed.

As a legislator and legislative leader, Gallegos said she has “an obligation to make sure we’re governing.”

Gallegos said she participates in “very regular conversations” with New Mexico House Speaker Brian Egolf, D-Santa Fe, and other House leaders “to make sure that we are prepared, that we’re ready to govern. I want New Mexico to get that,” she said. “We’re ready to move forward in any shape that takes.”

There are constitutional questions

at issue about the upcoming session, Gallegos said, including if legislators must meet in the state capital or at least meet somewhere in the county of Santa Fe to conduct the session in person, or if it can be held remotely or if a hybrid is possible. (Some legislators have said the Santa Fe Convention Center could be an alternative to meeting at the state capital because it would provide more space.)

Meeting virtually isn’t ideal because “people may not feel like their voice is being heard,” Gallegos said. Constituents are used to being present during committee hearings, she said, and that helps to give legislators “a real sense of the public view of (a) bill.” However, Gallegos said, “we may not be able to get that same sense with Zoom. We’re not going to be happy conducting legislation over Zoom, but if that keeps people safe and gets people the services they need, that’s what we’re going to have to do.”

At the same time, she said, “we need to be able to pivot. We should not put ourselves in a box.” The legislature should have a definite plan for how the session will be conducted, but should also have one or more fallback plans to make sure its work gets done, Gallegos said.

“I think the most important piece is for everybody to try to abide by the health rules that are being put forward,” Gallegos said.

Cooperation between the legislature’s majority Democrats and minority Republicans will be very important in 2021, she said. “We’ve got to find where we can work together,” Gallegos said. “I don’t want to be like Congress, where everything is so divided,” she said.

“We’re more alike than different. We’re in a time of crisis,” Gallegos said. Legislators should “look at all possibilities to help as many constituents as possible. Reaching across the aisle is part of that.”



DISTRICT 52

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eight

AGE: 52

BIRTHPLACE: El Paso, Texas

PROFESSION: Executive director, Mesilla Valley Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

EDUCATION: Bachelor's and master's degrees in social work, New Mexico State University

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Democrats lost two seats in the House in the 2020 general election. They will hold a 44-25-1 majority during the 2021 session.

As majority whip, Gallegos could face a particularly difficult task during the session trying to line-up the votes of Democrats on bills as they come up for votes, especially if legislators are meeting remotely.

If she isn’t able to meet face to face with other House members, Gallegos said she will rely on phone calls, emails and texts.

The 70-member House will also welcome 12 new members in January. As part of House leadership, one of Gallegos’ functions is to help make sure they are mentored and guided through the legislative process.

“Some of our more experienced legislators have got to make sure we work with the new ones, the freshmen,” she said.



WILLIE Madrid

Biggest push in session:
expanding broadband access

BY MIKE COOK

State Rep. Willie Madrid of Chaparral, New Mexico won re-election to New Mexico House District 53 by 37 votes over former state Rep. Ricky Little. It was the third time the two have run against each other for the House seat, with Little winning in 2016 and Madrid in 2018 and 2020.

Expanding broadband access in his district and statewide – “That’s going to be our biggest push” during the 2021 legislative session, Madrid said. Broadband access is particularly important for children, he said, so they can do their schoolwork remotely, interact and be “engaged with the school process.”

Representing a rural area in the legislature means working “to get our voices heard and get things moving down this way in the south.”

With the loss of powerful state Sens. John Arthur Smith of Deming and Mary Kay Papen of Las Cruces, it’s more important that ever that legislators from southern New Mexico regain strength in the legislature, he said.

Madrid said he is confident Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham will again propose legislation to legalize recreational cannabis during the session. “I still have to see what the bill is,” he said, and what issues it contains “that need to get ironed out” before he makes a final decision on how he’ll vote on the bill.

Legalization likely will face a bigger struggle in the Senate than in the House, where it passed in 2018, Madrid said. In terms of revenue generation and job creation, the production of recreational cannabis “will be great for our state.” Before passing a final bill, Madrid said, “we need to make it better than other states.”

Madrid said he has “a lot in the works” in terms of capital outlay projects in his district. “It’s hard on my heart,” he said, that little or no capital outlay funding may be available in

2021. If that’s the case, he said, he will find our resources for local projects.

“It’s going to revolve around the families, to make our families well and keep them well,” he said, again emphasizing the need for expanded broadband access in his district and rural areas throughout the state.

Providing adequate funding for education will be another very important issue during the session, he said. The Yazzie-Martinez lawsuit that mandates educational sufficiency for all students has set a “high bar” for legislators, he said.

“We’re still declining,” Madrid said. New Mexico is 50th in the nation in child wellbeing, he said, and that is “indicative of how we’re taking care of families. Families are the number one component. We’ve got to have jobs available for them.”

Figuring out the best and safest way to conduct the 2021 legislative session considering the pandemic must include bipartisanship, an interface between the House and Senate and keeping connected with constituents, Madrid said.

“Do what’s best for everybody,” he said. “I have a responsibility to my constituents and the whole population of our state.”

Using advanced technology to ensure a successful virtual session is “like taking an old dog and teaching him new tricks,” Madrid said. “I plan on being in Santa Fe for the entire session,” he said. Madrid said he has built important relationships during his two years in the New Mexico House and it’s important to be able to continue those points of contact during the 2021 session.

Madrid offered thanks to “my people in District 53 for getting out to vote in a very tumultuous time. Let’s exhale and inhale new air with a new outcome in 2021. Hold no grudges, condemn nobody. Have an open heart and open mind.”

DISTRICT 53

COUNTIES SERVED: Doña Ana, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Democrat

YEARS IN OFFICE: Two

AGE: 50

BIRTHPLACE: El Paso, Texas

PROFESSION: Former public schools education support staff, Gadsden Independent School District

EDUCATION: BA in business management, University of Phoenix

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DISTRICT 54

JAMES

Townsend

Townsend focus is on infrastructure

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

James Townsend said his biggest concerns for his district vary between a desperate need for infrastructure, including the roads and bridges, and that the legislature act fiscally responsible and not create any new taxes or indebtedness.

“I will be voting on those issues and leading the debate for those,” he said.

Townsend has served as a member of the House Appropriations & Finance Committee and a designee of the Legislative Finance Committee. Townsend said he tempers any spending initiatives with calls for fiscal restraint. Unopposed in both the primary and general election in 2018,

he would like to see the economy in the southeastern part of the state boom.

Budget items most critical to Townsend include Capital Outlay, education and the state highway improvement plan.

He said the state is losing its young people because they don’t have the same opportunities here as they do in other places.

All the counties and districts propose capital outlay projects and each municipality ranks their top three or top five projects, Townsend said. In his district, Carlsbad is looking to improve roads and infrastructure; water and schools are priorities in

COUNTIES SERVED:

Chaves, Eddy, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Six

AGE: 66

BIRTHPLACE: Carlsbad, New Mexico

PROFESSION: Retired senior vice president of Holly Corporation

EDUCATION: New Mexico State University

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE:

Lobbyist in Santa Fe and Washington, D.C. for 15 years.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Cloudcroft and Lake Arthur; Artesia needs more money for infrastructure and schools.

Townsend said he knows the caucus he is part of wants to “make sure that New Mexico is a better state at the end of the session and that’s what we will work to.”

■ SMALL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

Looking at what every department of state government will do “to change, evolve and adapt, both during and after COVID-19” brings “enormous challenges but also significant opportunities,” Small said. “As we dive into all of that, keeping a clear, consistent focus on education, jobs, on healthcare and infrastructure is the guiding light that will carry us forward and give us strong common ground to work together from.”

Small said he expects Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham to again introduce legislation to legalize the use of recreational cannabis in New Mexico during the session. “I support the effort with the appropriate safeguards,” he said. “We are following other states, being able to learn best practices,” but also are lagging behind “when it comes to the development of new revenue sources,” Small said.

“Diversification is just that – adding more economic opportunity, creating new jobs in many different ways,” he said. “We should not be suggesting that any one activity or new area of economic expansion is the silver bullet,” he said.

“I think representing House District 36, my responsibly is to work with folks and find solutions for challenges that exist in many areas,” Small said. That includes basic infrastructure needs like paved roads and gas service on the East Mesa north of Highway 70, he said.

“I am so proud of representing House District 36,” Small said. “I’m grateful for all the history and heritage in this valley, in New Mexico.”

■ DOW CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42

formula, but it’s costing the Silver City school district a million dollars a year.

“We should be advocating for small schools like Cliff.”

Regarding the legalization of recreational marijuana, a bill most expect to come up, Dow wants legislators to look at what’s best for New Mexicans.

“Let’s listen to our medical providers,” Dow said, adding that since medical marijuana was legalized in New Mexico, there have been mixed results for those in the state working as providers. “I’d like to see something where permitting promotes in-state ownership and operation. The bills I’ve seen would favor the big guys from out of state, and wouldn’t create wealth for New Mexicans.”

At the time of this interview, plans had not been finalized regarding the nature of the session, and Dow stressed the need for citizen input.

“I’m extremely concerned about a virtual session where folks may or may not be able to have public comment.”



DISTRICT 56

ZACH Cook

Cook stands with business owners for 2021

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

Entering his 12th year in the state legislature, Rep. Zach Cook said he is proud of his record in the Legislature but said there is still a lot to be done. Cook epitomizes the political demographics of his district, which includes most of Lincoln County and the northern tier of Otero County.

Both are solidly Republican, with ranching and tourism the dominant industries. The two largest cities, Ruidoso and Alamogordo, are vastly different in personality, and their economies are shaped by differing forces, but they are equally conservative. He is interested in improving

the education system and providing young people the skills they need to compete.

Cook voted against the state lawmakers' deal of giving \$750 to New Mexicans in need where immigration status was not a factor. He said in some cases those families who are in New Mexico illegally could end up getting more aid than families who are legal.

"I think we all have a lot of compassion and sympathy for the undocumented immigrants in our community," Cook told KOAT TV news. "But I think in a situation like this, I think we need to focus on getting the citizens of the United States and

COUNTIES SERVED: Lincoln, Otero

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Eleven

AGE: 48

BIRTHPLACE: Denver, Colorado

PROFESSION: Attorney

EDUCATION:

University of New Mexico law school

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EMAIL: zachjcook@gmail.com

residents of New Mexico the money that they need badly."

"I want to be part of the solution that makes our state No. 1 in jobs and economic growth," Cook said in a campaign statement. "This state is my home and I'm willing to do whatever I can to make it the best place to live for this and future generations."

In recent years cook has focused on issues pertaining to economic growth, education and infrastructure.



DISTRICT 59

GREGORY Nibert

Nibert enters fourth year in legislature

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

State Rep. Greg Nibert, a Republican, represents District 59, which includes portions of Chaves and Lincoln counties. He was reelected in 2020 for the seat he has held since 2017, succeeding former state Rep. Nora Espinoza. Republicans have held the seat since 1990.

"I guess it's time to roll up my sleeves and do the hard work ahead because the state is in some unprecedented times and faces a number of challenges, but I am ready to get to work and tackle those issues and get us back on better footing," Nibert told the Roswell Daily Record upon his reelection.

Nibert has served as a member of the House Judiciary Committee and the House

State Government, Elections and Indian Affairs Committees, as well as the interim Ethics Committee and Water and Natural Resources Committee.

Nibert served eight years on the Chaves County Commission before being elected to the state House and is a former chair of the Chaves County Republican Party. Nibert was named Lawyer of the Year in 2015 by the State Bar Section on Natural Resources, Energy and Environmental Law.

In June Nibert said lawmakers from his part of the state planned to wear masks and use hand sanitizer during the special session in Santa Fe and would keep their distance from legislators from other areas

COUNTIES SERVED: Chaves, Lincoln

POLITICAL PARTY: Republican

YEARS IN OFFICE: Four

AGE: 63

BIRTHPLACE: Roswell, N.M.

PROFESSION: Attorney

EDUCATION: B.A. from the University of New Mexico, 1980; law degree from Pepperdine University, 1983

OTHER POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Member (including service as chair) of the Chaves County Commission; former chair of the Chaves County Republican Party

CONTACT INFORMATION

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heavily affected by the novel coronavirus.

Nibert and his wife, Carolyn, have two sons and live in Roswell, which is Nibert's hometown.

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Catron County

Hanging tough is way of life in Catron

There is perhaps no clearer symbol of the pandemic in New Mexico than the closed Pie-O-Neer restaurant in Catron County.

As you travel U.S. Hwy. 60 west from Socorro County to Catron, you clearly see the historical contrast that has long been New Mexico. West of Magdalena, you'll find the massive satellite dishes of the Very Large Array, representing the state's role in space and technology. Further west, around Datil, you'll see signs warning of rattlesnakes, reminding you of New Mexico's rural desert and history of ranching and farming. And then you head into Pie Town. For years, residents and tourists alike have made the trip to tiny Pie Town for - you guessed it - some delicious pie. After the Coronavirus hit, though, the Pie-O-Neer shut down, and later went up for sale. Who knows if pies will ever come out of the ovens again? The 3,500 or so residents of Catron County have always been resilient, and can survive the loss of a restaurant. The long-term effects on the spirit, however, remain to be seen.



PHOTO BY ELMA OSTERREICH



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 3,527 (2019)
 Households: 1,381 (2014-2018)
 Median household income: \$42,480 (2018)
 Persons below poverty level: 23.3 percent (2018)

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 65 (2018)
 Total employment: 484 (2018)
 Non-employer establishments: 370 (2018)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 6,923.69
 Persons per square mile: 0.5 (2010)

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

BILL GREEN

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575-533-6423
575-533-6433 Fax
575-519-2064 Cell

LINDA COOKE

County Manager Assistant
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CATRON COUNTY COMMISSION

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575-533-6423

ANITA A. HAND

County Commissioner
District # 1
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CLIFF SNYDER

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District #2
Commission Chairman
Cliff.snyder@
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HAYDEN D. FORWARD

County Commissioner
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Glenwood, NM 88039
575-539-2324 Home
575-519-0404 Cell

OTHER ELECTED OFFICIALS

LILLIE LANEY

Catron County Assessor
P.O. Box 416
Reserve, NM 87830
575-533-6577

SHARON ARMIJO

Catron County Clerk
P.O. Box 197
Reserve, NM 87830
575-533-6400

JOYCE R. LANEY

Treasurer
P.O. Box 407
Reserve, NM 87830
575-533-6384

IAN FLETCHER

Sheriff
P.O. Box 467
Reserve, NM 87830
575-533-6222

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RESERVE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

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Reserve, NM 87830
575-533-6242
reserveschools.com

PHOTOS BY ELVA OSTERREICH



CATRON COUNTY COMMUNITIES

APACHE CREEK

Census-designated place
Population: 144 (2018)

ARAGON

Census-designated place
Population: 64 (2018)

CRUZVILLE

Census-designated place
Population: 182 (2018)

DATIL

Census-designated place
Population: 54

GLENWOOD

Census-designated place
Population: 143

LUNA

Census-designated place
Population: 158

PIE TOWN

Census-designated place
Population: 186

QUEMADO

Census-designated place
Population: 228

RESERVE

Census-designated place
Population: 277

PLEASANTON

Census-designated place,
Population: 106



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Doña Ana County



BULLETIN PHOTOS BY MIKE COOK

The Doña Ana County Crisis Triage Center is located at 1850 Copper Loop in Las Cruces.

County triage center to open

BY MIKE COOK

In late October, the New Mexico Department of Health issued an operator's license to Recovery Innovations, Inc. d.b.a. RI International, for the operation of the Doña Ana County Crisis Triage Center (CTC). RI International, a Phoenix-based non-profit, operates 12 other crisis triage centers throughout the country. The county built the 5,750-square-foot CTC in 2013 and has searched for an operator since then. Several important changes allowed the county to move forward with opening CTC, including changes in the state licensing process and allowing Medicaid dollars to be used to pay for CTC services.

"This action opens the door to a fully operational crisis triage center," Doña Ana County Manager Fernando Macias said. "It is truly a historic moment to have this facility finally licensed."

"The center will help to alleviate the strain on healthcare and law enforcement systems by specifically assisting individuals experiencing mental health crisis," said county Health and Human Services Department Director Jamie Michael. "It will also mark the creation of a system that addresses mental health with more efficacy and compassion."

Santa Teresa continued strong economic growth throughout 2020, despite the pandemic. There were strong increases in commercial, private and pedestrian traffic at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry, the jetport got a \$9 million facelift and Santa Teresa welcomed Prent Corporation, the world's leading designer and manufacturer of custom plastic, rigid thermoform packaging for the medical, electronics and consumer industries.



DOÑA ANA COUNTY PHOTO

Fernando Macias

DOÑA ANA QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 218,195 (2019); grew 4.3 percent, April 2010-July 2019

Households: 77,453 (2019)

Median household income: \$39,164 (2014-18)

Persons below poverty level: 26.3 percent

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 3,658 (2018)

Non-employer establishments: 13,241 (2018)

GEOGRAPHY

Land Area (square miles): 3,807

Persons per square mile: 55 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



DOÑA ANA COUNTY PHOTO

New Santa Teresa Jetport Runway.

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Ifo Pili is new Las Cruces city manager

BY MIKE COOK

Ifo Pili was unanimously selected by the Las Cruces City Council to become the city's newest city manager. He started his job Sept. 8, moving himself, his wife and their eight children from their home in Eagle Mountain, Utah, where Pili has worked for the city since 2006.

A native of American Samoa, Pili had been Eagle Mountain city administrator for the past eight years before accepting the job in Las Cruces. While serving as Eagle Mountain city administrator, Pili was district administrator for the Unified Fire Service Area and was an adjunct professor in BYU's masters of public administration program.

In a November interview, Pili said he has also been impressed by "how many people are working on the same goals" to make Las Cruces better.

"I'm really excited for what we have on the horizon," he said. "I think we're going to do some great things here."

Pili said his main focus as city manager

is to reduce Las Cruces' poverty rate. Eagle Mountain saw its median household income increase by \$20,000 in a decade during his tenure there, he said.

"Government didn't do that," Pili said. "It was business that did that."

That kind of growth is possible for Las Cruces, Pili said. "Going after business and economic development, I honestly believe that's going to move the poverty dial."

Ultimately, Pili said he would like to see Las Cruces ranked as the best place to live in the United States.

From Saputo Dairy of Las Cruces doubling its employment to Electronic Care-giver working toward becoming one of the largest employers in New Mexico, "what we have here is amazing," Pili said. "That message needs to be shared," he said, and "shouted from the rooftops."

Pili moved to Orem, Utah in 1994 and graduated from high school there. He was a lineman with the Brigham Young University Cougars and the NFL's Houston Texans,

CITY OF LAS CRUCES PHOTO



Ifo Pili

Philadelphia Eagles and New England Patriots, and has an NFL championship ring as part of the Eagles' 2004 National Football League champion team. Pili has a BS in political science and a masters' of public administration, both from BYU.

Visit www.las-cruces.org/1396/City-Managers-Office.

CITIZENS BANK

My Community. My Bank.

<p>Main Branch 505 S. Main St., Las Cruces, NM 575-647-4100</p>	<p>Country Club Branch 2841 N. Main St., Las Cruces, NM 575-647-4136</p>	<p>Picacho Branch 3030 W. Picacho Ave., Las Cruces, NM 575-528-6363</p>	<p>University Branch 3065 E. University Ave., Las Cruces, NM 575-647-6700</p>
<p>Roadrunner Branch 3991 E. Lohman Ave., Las Cruces, NM 575-528-6300</p>	<p>T or C Branch 1920 N. Date St., T or C, NM 575-894-0820</p>	<p>El Paso Branch 2500 N. Mesa St. Ste. A El Paso, TX 915-275-0750</p>	<p>Member FDIC EQUAL HOUSING LENDER</p>

www.citizensc.com

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE

HATCH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: To advance the economic, industrial, educational, professional, cultural and civic conditions and standards for the Hatch Valley through networking, creating dialogue and capturing goals which individual members support, and the organization pursues.

Address: P.O. Box 568, Hatch, NM 87937

Phone: 575-519-4723

Email: hatchchamber@gmail.com

Website: www.villageofhatch.org/links/chamber_of_commerce

GREATER LAS CRUCES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: Since 1952 the GLCCC has provided area businesses a unique mix of products, services and advocacy to help them grow their businesses and build a better and stronger community.

Address: 150 E. Lohman Ave.,

Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: 575-524-1968 Fax: 575-527-5546

Email: chamber@lascruces.org

Website: www.lascruces.org

LAS CRUCES GREEN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: To promote socially and environmentally responsible businesses and to build a vibrant and successful local economy based on the Triple Bottom Line.

Address: 221 N. Main St.,

Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

Phone: 575-323-1575

Website: locallascrucres.com

LAS CRUCES HISPANIC CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mission: The Las Cruces Hispanic Chamber of Commerce provides leadership for the advancement of economic prosperity for our region and our diverse membership.

Address: 277 E. Amador Ave, Suite 305,

Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: 575-524-8900 Fax: 575-532-9255

Website: lascruceshispanicchamber.com

ELECTED OFFICIALS

DOÑA ANA COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

845 N. Motel Blvd.,
Las Cruces, NM 88007

575-647-7201

www.donaanacounty.org

DISTRICT 1

Lynn Ellins

575-525-5808

lellini@donaanacounty.org

DISTRICT 2

Diana Murillo-Trujillo

DISTRICT 3

Shannon Reynolds

575-525-5807

sreynolds@donaanacounty.org

DISTRICT 4

Susana Chaparro

DISTRICT 5

Manuel Sanchez

575-525-5809

msanchez@donaanacounty.org

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL

City of Las Cruces

700 N Main

Las Cruces, N.M. 88001

575-541-2000

www.las-cruces.org

DISTRICT 3

Gabriel Vasquez

575-541-2066

gvasquez@las-cruces.org

DISTRICT 4

Johana Bencomo

575-541-2066

DISTRICT 5

Gill Sorg

575-541-2066

gsorg@las-cruces.org

DISTRICT 6

Yvonne Flores

575-541-2066

yflores@las-cruces.org

MAYOR

Ken Miyagishima

575-541-2067

mayor@las-cruces.org

DISTRICT 1

Kasandra Gandara,

Mayor pro-tem

575-541-2066

kgandara@las-cruces.org

DISTRICT 2

Tessa Abeyta Stuve

575-541-2066

DOÑA ANA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ANTHONY

City Population: 9,239

Mayor:

Diana Murillo-Trujillo

BERINO

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,441 (2010)

CHAMBERINO

Census-designated Place

Population: 919 (2010)

CHAPARRAL

Census-designated Place

Population: 14,631
(6,965 in Doña Ana County)

DOÑA ANA

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,211 (2010)

FAIRACRES

Census-designated Place

Population: 824 (2010)

GARFIELD

Census-designated

Place Population: 137 (2010)

HATCH

Population: 2,650 (2018)

Village Mayor: Andy Nuñez

LA MESA

Census-designated Place

Population: 737 (2016)

LA UNION

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,124
(2016 estimate)

LAS CRUCES

Population: 103,432 (2018)

Mayor: Ken Miyagishima

MESILLA

Town Population: 1,028

Mayor: Nora L. Barraza

MESQUITE

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,112 (2010)

ORGAN

Census-designated Place

Population: 323 (2010)

PLACITAS

Census-designated Place

Population: 576 (2010)

RADIUM SPRINGS

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,888
(2016 estimate)

RINCON

Census-designated Place

Population: 271 (2010)

RODEY

Census-designated Place

Population: 388

SALEM

Census-designated Place

Population: 942

SAN MIGUEL

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,153 (2010)

SAN PABLO

Census-designated Place

Population: 836 (2016
estimate)

SAN YSIDRO

Census-designated Place

Population: 194 (2014
estimate)

SANTA TERESA

Census-designated Place

Population: 4,258 (2010)

SUNLAND PARK

City Population: 17,978

(2019)

Mayor: Javier Perea

UNIVERSITY PARK

Census-designated Place

Population: 4,192 (2010)

VADO

Census-designated Place

Population: 3,194 (2010)

WHITE SANDS

Census-designated Place

Population: 1,651 (2010)

CITY OF LAS CRUCES 2021 NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

— CAPITAL OUTLAY PRIORITIES —



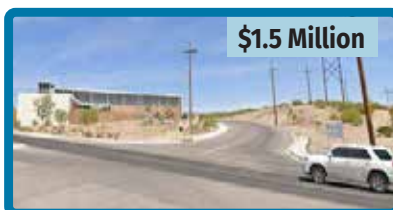
HERE'S TO A GREAT 2021!

"As mayor of Las Cruces, my fellow members of City Council and I look forward to working with Governor Michelle Lujan

Grisham, our southern New Mexico delegation and lawmakers from across the state this legislative session. Las Cruces is a dynamic city and together we can continue to enhance its many great qualities.

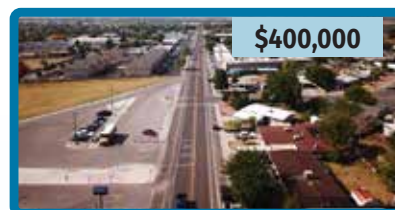
—KEN MIYAGISHIMA, Mayor of Las Cruces

STREET & FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS



East Mesa Roads and Drainage

Project includes land acquisitions, design, rights of way, and roadway construction to include utilities and flood control.



Madrid Road Extension

Plan, design, construct extension of Madrid Avenue from Martha to Triviz Drive.

SEPTIC SYSTEM REPLACEMENT — BRANIGAN CULTURAL CENTER — AIRPORT



Septic System Replacement

Plan, design and construct septic system replacements and improvements in remaining Brittany Estates, Estados Serenos and Hacienda Acres Phase III subdivisions.



Branigan Cultural Center: Phase II Improvements

Improvements to Interior and exterior wood elements, exterior stucco, original windows, and other improvements.



Airport (terminal expansion)

Plan, design, and equip expansion of existing terminal at the Las Cruces International Airport, to include environmental and other property studies, to support the development of commercial flights.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS UPGRADES



Police: Upgrade and replace radios

Purchase, equip, and install improvements to the Public Safety Equipment in Las Cruces to include emergency response tactical vehicles.



Fire: Upgrade and replace radios

P-25 interconnectivity communication system for Las Cruces Police and Fire. Current overall completion at 86% (Fire) and at 85% (Police).



IT Infrastructure for P25 Communications

Upgrades to A-Mountain Repeaters as final step in process.



[/CityofLasCruces](#) [CLCGOV](#) [CLCOTV.com](#) [las-cruces.org](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Ifo Pili, City Manager • 575/541-2076 • ipili@las-cruces.org • Lawrence Horan, Lobbyist • 505/859-2895

City has nine items on capital outlay list

BY MIKE COOK

The Las Cruces City Council discussed its priorities for capital outlay funding from the New Mexico Legislature during an October work session, considering nine items totaling more than \$9 million.

The funding priorities are septic system replacement: \$3.8 million, East Mesa roads and drainage projects: \$1,250,000, extending Madrid Road from Martha to Triviz: \$400,000, police mobile data terminal replacements: \$120,000, Fire Station No. 1 improvements: \$350,000, public safety communications upgrades: \$844,000, Branigan Cultural Center improvements: \$1.5 million, Youth Services buildings improvements: \$585,000 and Las Cruces International Airport terminal building expansion: \$500,000.

At the meeting, city legislative lobbyist Larry Horan recommended that the nine items be reduced to three to five to present to local legislators for consideration during the 2021 legislative session. Because of the impact of COVID-19 on the state budget, Horan said there could be little or no capital outlay funding available for local projects during the 2021 session.

“At a time like this, the shorter the list the better,” Horan said.

The council was expected to narrow the list of items in a December council meeting.



EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

GADSDEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
4950 McNutt Road,
Sunland Park, NM 88063
575-882-6200
www.gisd.k12.nm.us

HATCH VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

204 Hill St., Hatch, NM 87937
P.O. Box 790, Hatch, NM 87937
575-267-8200
www.hatchschools.net

LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

505 S. Main St. Ste. 249,
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-527-5800
lcp.s.k12.nm.us

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

ACTON ACADEMY
MESILLA VALLEY
1730 Tierra de Mesilla,
Las Cruces, NM 88005
575-449-4796
www.actonlascruces.com

CORNERSTONE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

5301 Cortez Drive, Las Cruces,
NM 88012
575-532-0902
www.cornerstn.org

DESERT SPRINGS CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

210 S. Nevarez St., Las Cruces,
NM 88001
575-571-7709
dscalions.org

LAS CRUCES ACADEMY

1755 Avenida de Mercado, Me-
silla, NM 88046
575-521-9384
lascrucesacademy.org

HOLY CROSS SCHOOL AND ST. MARY'S HIGH SCHOOL

1331 N. Miranda St.,
Las Cruces, NM 88005
575-526-2517
lccsonline.org

MESILLA VALLEY CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

3850 Stern Drive,
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-525-8515
mvcsonline.com

MISSION LUTHERAN SCHOOL

2752 N. Roadrunner Pkwy., 88011
575-532-5489
www.mlschool.net

CHARTER SCHOOLS

ALMA D'ARTE CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL
402 W. Court Ave., Las Cruces,
NM 88005
575-541-0145
www.almadarte.org

LA ACADEMIA DOLORES HUERTA MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 W. Bell Ave., Las Cruces,
NM 88005
575-526-2984
ladh.org

J. PAUL TAYLOR ACADEMY

402 W. Court Ave., Building 2,
Las Cruces, NM 88005
575-652-4006
www.jpaultayloracademy.org

LAS MONTAÑAS CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

1405 S. Solano Drive,
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-527-5916
www.lasmontanashigh.com

NEW AMERICA SCHOOL

207 S. Main St.,
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-527-9085
www.facebook.com/newamericaschool

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

DOÑA ANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE (DACC) – CENTRAL CAMPUS
3400 S. Espina St.,
Las Cruces, NM 88003
575-527-7500
dacc.nmsu.edu

DACC – EAST MESA CAMPUS

2800 N. Sonoma Ranch Blvd.,
Las Cruces, NM 88011
575-528-7000

DACC – GADSDEN CENTER

1700 E. O'Hara Rd., Anthony,
NM 88021
575-882-3939

DACC – SUNLAND PARK CENTER

3365 McNutt Road, Sunland
Park, NM 88063
575-874-7780

DACC – WORKFORCE CENTER

2345 E. Nevada Ave.
Las Cruces, NM 88001
575-527-7776

DACC – CHAPARRAL CENTER

755 Prescott Anthony Drive
Chaparral, NM 88081
575-824-2000

UNIVERSITIES

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY (NMSU)
1780 E. University Ave.,
Las Cruces, NM 88003
575-646-0111
nmsu.edu

Quality of Life: Senior Programs, RoadRUNNER Transit, Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, Volunteer Network, and Las Cruces Public Art



We are Quality of Life. We are Las Cruces.

www.las-cruces.org 575.541.2048 700 N. Main, Las Cruces, NM 88001



affordable



NMSU Doña Ana Community College

dacc.nmsu.edu
575-527-7710



accredited



PHOTO GETTY IMAGES

MVEDA and the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce are soaring to new heights to partner and provide economic health and business growth in Doña Ana County and NM!

- Support in permanency of Flight Informed Consent.
- Expansion & Access of Broadband throughout our State.
- Economic assistance to small businesses in light of COVID. Support updates to Small Business Recovery Fund to extend accessibility through 2021 & broaden perimeters of applications.
- Increase Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) funding.
- Maintain a closing fund for economic development projects (LEDA) of between \$60-75 million.



HELPFUL TIPS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROPERTY ASSESSMENT.

1 YOUR NOTICE OF VALUE IS THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR PROPERTY TAX PROCESS. LOOK FOR IT IN THE MAIL IN APRIL 2021.

Each year the Assessor mails each property owner a "Notice of Value." This form serves to inform the owner of the total assessed value, the property description and exemptions applied to the property. Doña Ana County will mail notices on or around April 1st of each year. This form is an important step in the property tax process. Please read it carefully and follow the instructions on the back. You have 30 days from the official mail date to apply for exemptions and benefits, or to appeal your valuation.

DISAGREE WITH YOUR VALUATION?

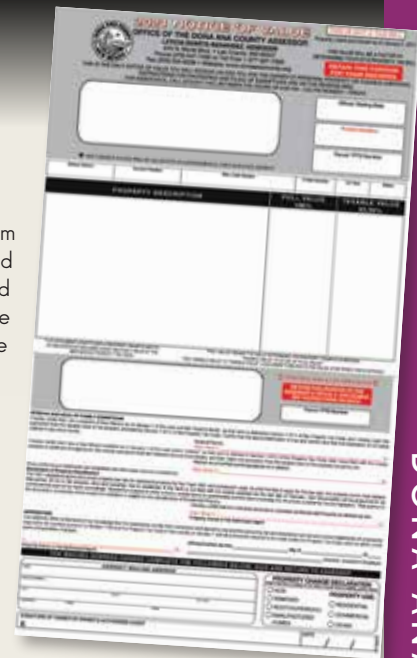
Property owners may appeal the value or classification determined for their property by filing a petition of protest with the County Assessor within 30 days of the official mail date of the notice of value. Doña Ana County will mail notices on or around April 1st of each year. Protest forms are available on our website or in our office.

2 TAXPAYER BENEFITS & EXEMPTIONS DO YOU QUALIFY FOR A TAX PAYER BENEFIT? WHEN IS THE DEADLINE TO APPLY?

The deadline for claiming the head of family, veterans, 100 percent disabled veteran's exemptions, as well as the valuation freeze is 30 days after the official date of mailing as indicated yearly on the Assessor's official "Notice of Value." Doña Ana County will mail notices on or around April 1st of each year. You can apply in person or by mail. Veteran Exemptions must be claimed in person. For more information regarding each of these exemptions log on to www.donaanacounty.org/assessor and view our helpful tips or call the Assessor's office at (575) 647-7400.

3 DISCLOSURE OF SALES PRICE

New Mexico law requires the disclosure of residential sales information to the County Assessor's Office. This must be accomplished by filing a notarized affidavit at the Assessor's office within thirty days of the date of filing a deed, real estate contract or memorandum of real estate contract with the County Clerk. There are some exceptions for having to comply with the disclosure. The exceptions are listed on the back of the required form, and the form can be viewed on our website. All information collected is required to be kept confidential with the Assessor's office, and will not be made available as public information. Failure to comply with the law could result in a conviction of a misdemeanor and punishable by the imposition of a fine of not more than one thousand dollars (\$1,000). Free notary service is available in our office for this purpose.



DOÑA ANA COUNTY ASSESSOR'S OFFICE



QUESTIONS? Please contact our office.
 Doña Ana County Assessor
 845 N. Motel Blvd., Las Cruces, NM 88007
 Phone: 575-647-7400 Fax: 575-525-5538

www.donaanacounty.org/assessor

Leticia Duarte-Benavidez
 County Assessor

NMSU students, faculty, staff blazing new trails

FROM NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY NEWS RELEASES

As New Mexico State University began delivering 100 percent of courses online after the Thanksgiving holiday break, students, staff and faculty were continuing with important work.

NMSU licenses specialized whiskey, wine, beer

In November, NMSU and Dry Point Distillers launched Pistol Pete's Six-Shooter, the first collegiate-licensed whiskey in the country. A portion of the proceeds will go to support NMSU's more than 400 student-athletes. Pistol Pete's Six-Shooter is a rye whiskey that has been aged for three years and is Dry Point's fourth whiskey to be released. The label design pays homage to NMSU's history and the university's founding more than 130 years ago in the Old West. The spirit will be served in craft cocktails at Dry Point's location in Mesilla, New Mexico.

In October, NMSU and New Mexico-based Lescombes Winery announced the creation and launch of Pistol Pete's Crimson Legacy, one of less than 10 collegiate-licensed wines in the country. The wine is described as a New Mexico Cabernet Sauvignon, with hints of red berries, ripe cherries, toast and oak that will pair well with traditional red wine dishes. Revenues generated from sales of Crimson Legacy will go to support the more than 400 student athletes who attend NMSU. The university was founded in 1888, so fittingly, the first run of Pistol Pete's Crimson Legacy totals 1,888 bottles. The back of the Crimson Legacy wine bottle tells the story of New Mexico's rich, interesting, and largely unknown history of wine making, which started in the 1600s with Spanish priests who needed sacramental wine. Because the wine was too heavy to transport, they instead planted grapevines along New Mexico's Rio Grande Valley – decades before wine came to California.

In 2017, NMSU worked with New Mexico-based Bosque Brewing Company to create and launch Pistol Pete's 1888 Ale. Since its debut, the beer is now available at more than 300 locations in 70 cities and towns across New Mexico.

NMSU Theatre produces 'Tracer'

The NMSU Department of Theatre Arts original production, "Tracer" was live streamed in November. The plot follows a

NMSU PHOTO BY DEREK FLODMAN



New Mexico State University's Physical Science Laboratory has been awarded a 10-year, \$92,870,000 contract by the U.S. Department of Defense.

student who becomes ill at a Halloween party and the contact tracer sent to investigate foul play. This mix of current events and "who done it" is served up for audiences via live streaming. "Tracer" is a unique blend of five actors performing during the live stream alongside a pre-recorded supporting ensemble cast. While live streaming, the actors will be in separate rooms inside the NMSU Center for the Arts.

Study examines firearms sales

An NMSU public health researcher has published a new study that examines firearm sales in the United States amid the coronavirus pandemic. Jagdish Khubchandani, public health professor in the College of Health and Social Services at NMSU, served as the lead author of the study, which examines public perceptions on firearm-buying habits during the pandemic. The study was published in the Journal of the American College of Emergency Physicians Open, an official journal of the American College of Emergency Physicians. The findings show 18 percent of the study participants reported buying a firearm during the pandemic, with a tenth of them being first-time buyers. Young, single, urban dwellers, health care professionals and Hispanics were more likely to have bought a firearm during the pandemic. The study also reveals firearm buyers differed statistically significantly from non-buyers based on sex, age, ethnicity, marital status, education, having children at home, employment status, income, political orien-

tation, location, and region of residence. The study is available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/emp2.12293>.

NMSU among Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics

NMSU has been recognized on the Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics list published in the October issue of The Hispanic Outlook on Education Magazine. NMSU ranked 44th in total enrollment for bachelor's degrees and 53rd for total enrollment for four-year schools. NMSU also was listed as 57th in total enrollment for master's degrees. With degrees ranked by major, NMSU was ninth in degrees in agriculture and agriculture operations.

NMSU's Physical Science Laboratory awarded 10-year, \$92.8 million contract

The NMSU Physical Science Laboratory has been awarded a 10-year, \$92,870,000 contract from the U.S. Department of Defense to support the information operations, vulnerability/survivability assessment and analysis program. The new contract from the Combat Capabilities Development Command (CCDC) Data and Analysis Center (DAC), part of the U.S. Army Futures Command, was effective Sept. 18. Founded by NMSU in 1946, PSL has supported various government and private sector scientific and technical activities throughout the U.S. and the world through contracts and research agreements.

After additional feedback, 'Gateway to NMSU' project moves forward with combined design

Construction of the "Gateway to NMSU," a large-scale construction project on the east side of New Mexico State University's Las Cruces campus, is set to begin this year. The monument, coinciding with the massive Interstate 25/University Avenue reconstruction project, will welcome students, employees and visitors to campus. Cost for the project is approximately \$1.1 million, which will be paid for by the sale of land for the I-25/University Avenue construction project and additional funding which can only be used for capital improvements and projects of this kind. Construction cannot begin until the I-25/University Avenue project is completed, tentatively scheduled for September 2021.



Doña Ana County: Leading With Integrity

The County's capital request for 2021 builds upon county, state and federal funding for much needed infrastructure throughout the community to continue to expand public safety, grow economic opportunity and improve quality of life for all residents and businesses. Doña Ana County is thankful for the past support of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and the Legislators.



Lynn Ellins



Flood Mitigation: A highly populated area of Doña Ana County that is vulnerable to flooding is the East Mesa. Likewise, Doña Ana Village is also susceptible to flooding. Support for major flood construction and mitigation projects is a priority in 2021.



Diana Murillo-Trujillo



Doña Ana County International Jetport in Santa Teresa: A long waiting list for hanger space at the jetport has resulted in a significant need to expand hanger capacity.



Shannon Reynolds



Public Safety: Public safety and quality of life are both enhanced with improvements to county wide communications for Fire, Sheriff's Office and Office of Emergency Management creating a network for more efficient coordination.



Susana Chaparro



Roads: Doña Ana County roads continue to be a priority. County maintained roads enhance quality of life for our residents and businesses.

Wastewater: Improvements and upgrades to wastewater treatment plants will protect the infrastructure and ensure efficient wastewater treatment.



Manuel A. Sanchez



These priorities will enrich the quality of life for Doña Ana County residents and businesses helping to fulfill our mission: "Doña Ana County enhances the health, safety and quality of life for all residents..."

Southern Doña Ana County



DOÑA ANA COUNTY PHOTO



PHOTOS COURTESY OF JERRY PACHECO

Santa Teresa continues record growth

BY MIKE COOK

“I think that Santa Teresa is uniquely positioned to take advantage of the reshoring and nearshoring (U.S. manufacturing returning to the U.S. or closer to the U.S. from overseas), especially now that we are going to have another 500,000 square feet of industrial space coming on line soon,” said Border Industrial Association President Jerry Pacheco. “The reshoring/nearshoring is being sped up by the COVID crisis. That bodes well for us,” he said.

Pacheco founded BIA in 2009. It is an advocacy group that represents the Santa Teresa Industrial base. Since its founding, the BIA has successfully lobbied for more than \$50 million in infrastructure funding for the Santa Teresa industrial base. (Visit www.nmbia.org.)

Jetport runway gets \$9 million facelift

After a year of nonstop construction, the Doña Ana County International Jetport runway, 8014 Airport Road in Santa Teresa, is complete and now in operation.

The planning and designing process for the runway began in 2017, with construction starting in October 2019.

The old runway was built in 1983 in three sections, each with a different and uneven weight capacity: 20,000 pounds for the center section, 64,000 pounds for the west section and 94,000 pounds for the east section.

The project was paid for with \$9 million in capital outlay funding from the New Mexico Legislature, support from Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, the Federal Aviation Administration and the Aviation Division of the New Mexico Department of Transportation.

The new runway is 9,950 feet long and 75 feet wide and can accommodate a 94,000-pound aircraft, which is equivalent to a Boeing 737-300 series. The project included replacement of regular lights with LED lights, new runway wiring and lighting control systems.

The jetport is a full-service general aviation airport serving southern Doña Ana County and the El Paso area. The jetport currently houses 141 aircraft, 19 of which are corporate jets, 32 corporate aircraft hangars and eight sets of T-hangars.

Visit www.donaanacounty.org.

Santa Teresa border crossings increase

Statistics from Santa Teresa Customs and Border Protection virtual meeting showed increases in commercial, private and pedestrian traffic at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry (STPOE), Dear Border Industrial Association (BIA) President Jerry Pacheco said.

Commercial traffic reached 13,402 trucks in July, an 11.75 percent increase over June. “This is an all-time, record high for truck crossings at STPOE,” Pacheco said. The previous record was May 2019 with 13,221 commercial crossings, he said. Commercial traffic was 12,163 in August 2020, which was a higher total than any more year to date except July.

“STPOE only has to average 9,000 commercial crossings in August and September to surpass the entire 2019 total for commercial crossings,” Pacheco said. “It’s amazing that during the current pandemic, we are seeing commercial crossings at STPOE rise substantially. We are building momentum to surpass the port of entry at Hidalgo, Texas, which would make STPOE the fourth largest port by volume on the entire U.S.-Mexico border.”

Privately operated vehicle crossings increased 12.21 percent in July 2020 compared to June 2020 and were up and were up by more than 5,000 from July 2020 (32,607) to August 2020 (37,778). Pedestrian crossings increased 14 percent in July compared to June.





Grant County

Grant County community bands together

Grant County is home to the Gila National Forest encompassing some of the wildest and most beautiful land and darkest skies in New Mexico. Silver City, the county seat, provides a jumping off point for exploring the Gila and the Continental Divide Trail and is home to Western New Mexico University, which houses the world's largest permanent collection of Mimbres pottery, is renowned for its arts culture and has hosted the Tour of the Gila road cycling event for more than 30 years.

The past year has seen the community and businesses band together to stay insulated from the coronavirus potential. The downtown area and activities have attempted to stay local and provide area business incentives to weather the times. While some area restaurants and businesses have disappeared from the landscape, others have popped up and are thriving. The community spirit is alive and well in Grant County.



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

- Population: 26,998 (2018)
- Households: 12,003 (2014-18)
- Median household income: \$37,880 (2014-18)
- Persons below poverty level: 20.7 percent

BUSINESS

- Total employer establishments: 578 (2018)
- Total employment: 6,549 (2018)
- Total non-employer establishments: 1,542 (2018)

GEOGRAPHY

- Land area (square miles): 3,962
- Persons per square mile: 7.4

Source: www.census.gov



ELECTED OFFICIALS

GRANT COUNTY COMMISSION

Grant County Administration Center
1400 Highway 180 E,
Silver City, NM 88061
P.O. Box 898, Silver City, NM 88062
575-574-0000

DISTRICT 1

Chris M. Ponce
575-574-0021
cponce@grantcountynm.com

DISTRICT 2

Javier C. Salas
575-574-0022
jsalas@grantcountynm.com

SILVER CITY TOWN COUNCIL

101 W. Broadway St.
P.O. Box 1188
Silver City, NM 88062
575-538-3731

MAYOR

Ken Ladner
575-313-3990
kenladner@hotmail.com

DISTRICT 1

Cynthia Ann Bettison
575-597-7031
councilordistrict1@silvercitynm.gov

DISTRICT 3

Alicia Kay Edwards
575-654-4364
aedwards@grantcountynm.com

DISTRICT 4

Gerald Wayne Billings
575-574-0092
bbillings@grantcountynm.com

DISTRICT 5

Harry Francis Browne
575-654-4396
hbrowne@grantcountynm.com

DISTRICT 2

Lynda D. Aiman-Smith
575-597-7032, 575-519-1680 (cell)
councilordistrict2@silvercitynm.gov

DISTRICT 3

Jose A. Ray, Jr.
575-313-4944
jose_r88061@yahoo.com
councilordistrict3@silvercitynm.gov

DISTRICT 4

Guadalupe "Lupe" Cano
575-597-7034
councilordistrict4@silvercitynm.gov

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SILVER CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS
2810 N. Swan St.,
Silver City, NM 88061
575-956-2000
www.silverschools.org

COBRE CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT

900 A. Central Ave.,
Bayard, NM 88023
P.O. Box 1000, Bayard, NM 88023
575-537-4010
www.cobre.k12.nm.us

CHARTER SCHOOLS

**ALDO LEOPOLD CHARTER
SCHOOL**
410 W. 10th St.,
Silver City NM 88061
575-538-2547
aldocs.org

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

**GUADALUPE MONTESSORI
SCHOOL**
1731 N. Alabama St.,
Silver City, NM 88061
575-388-3343
www.guadalupeмонтessori.org

UNIVERSITIES/ COLLEGES

**WESTERN NEW MEXICO
UNIVERSITY**
1000 W. College Ave.,
Silver City, NM 88062
P.O. Box 680,
Silver City, NM 88062
800-872-9668, 575-538-6011
wnmu.edu



**WESTERN
NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY**

Silver City, New Mexico

GRANT COUNTY COMMUNITIES

BAYARD

City Population: 2,123

CLIFF

Census-designated place
Population: 293

HURLEY

Census-designated place
Population: 1,176

PINOS ALTOS

Census-designated place
Population: 198

SANTA CLARA

Village Population: 761

SAN LORENZO

Census-designated place
Population: 97

SILVER CITY

Town, County Seat
Population: 9,386

LAKE ROBERTS

Census-designated place
Population: 53

FAYWOOD

Census-designated place
Population: 33

HANOVER

Census-designated place
Population: 167



Hidalgo County

Election brings some new faces

For the first time since the 1980s, Hidalgo County is represented in the New Mexico Senate by someone OTHER than John Arthur Smith.

Smith was unseated in the 2020 Democratic primary, but in the general election, newcomer Crystal Diamond, a Republican, won the nod. Diamond, from Truth or Consequences, takes over representation of the sprawling District 35, which includes all of Hidalgo, Luna and Sierra Counties and a chunk of Doña Ana.

Hidalgo also has a new county commissioner, Republican Arthur Malott, and a new county clerk, Democrat Alyssa Esquivel.



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 4,198 (2019)
 Households: 1,753 (2014-18)
 Median household income: \$36,339 (2014-18)
 Persons below poverty level, percent: 25.7 percent

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 104 (2018)
 Non-employer establishments: 205 (2018)
 Total employment: 882 (2018)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 3,436.86
 Persons per square mile: 1.4 (2018)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



ELECTED OFFICIALS

HIDALGO COUNTY COMMISSION

305 Pyramid St.
Lordsburg, NM, 88045
575-542-9428

Joey Mora
575-313-4012
morav701@gmail.com

Johnny Hatch
jchatch259@gmail.com

Joel Edwards
575-574-0291
pronghorn@gilanet.com

COMMISSION AT LARGE 3
Arthur G. Malott

LORDSBURG CITY COUNCIL

409 W. Wabash St.
Lordsburg, NM 88045
575-542-3259

Susie Cole

Irene Galvan

Eddie Lopez

Rodney Plowman
(re-elected) 575-542-3259

Alfredo Morelos, Jr.
(newly elected) 575-538-1128

SHERIFF

Warren D. Walter
575-542-3833

COUNTY CLERK

Alyssa A. Esquivel
575-542-9213

COUNTY MANAGER

Tisha Green
575-542-9427
tisha.green@
hidalgocounty.com

MAYOR

Robert Barrera
575-542-3421

CHIEF OF POLICE

Art De La Garza
575-542-3505

HIDALGO COUNTY COURTHOUSE

300 Shakespeare St.,
Lordsburg, NM 88045
(575) 542-9428

EDUCATION

LORDSBURG MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

401 W. 4th St.,
Lordsburg, NM 88045
(575) 542-9361
www.lmsed.org

SCHOOL BOARD

Afredo Morelos, Jr., President
(575) 538-1128

Susie Cole, Vice president

Edgar Gomez, Secretary

Alyssa Esquivel

Jonah Barrera

SUPERINTENDENT

Stephen Lucas

PRINCIPALS

Scott Roberson, Lordsburg HS

Ralph Almanzar, Central,
Dugan-Tarango Middle Schools

Adam Amador, R.V. Traylor
Elementary School

ANIMAS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#1 Panther Blvd.,
Animas, NM 88020
(575) 548-2299
animask12.net

SCHOOL BOARD

William Hurt, President

William "Bunch" Swift,
Vice President

Jared Fralie, Secretary

Trina Kellogg

Wayne Johnson

SUPERINTENDENT

Loren Cushman

PRINCIPAL

Ron Pierce

HIDALGO COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ANIMAS

Census-designated place
Population: 237

COTTON CITY

Census-designated place
Population: 388

GLEN ACRES

Census-designated place
Population: 208

LORDSBURG

City, County Seat
Population: 2,398

RODEO

Census-designated place
Population: 101

VIRDEN

Population: 129

PLAYAS

Census-designated place
Population: 74

WINDMILL

Census-designated place
Population: 43

Source: U.S. Census population estimates, 2018



Lincoln County

Medical center opening was bright spot for Lincoln

Like so many American communities whose economy thrives on tourism, Lincoln County's world was turned upside down by the Coronavirus in 2020.

Activities at Ski Apache; longstanding spring, summer and fall events; entertainment at the Spencer Theater; racing at Ruidoso Downs; and the normal dining and outdoor routines of vacationers from both in and out of New Mexico were all either canceled or deeply scaled back because of the pandemic.

Perhaps ironically, though, one important entity opened in 2020. The new Lincoln County Medical Center, nearly four years in the making, began serving patients in May. The center includes 25 private rooms and a wide variety of services new to the community.



PHOTOS BY ELVA OSTERREICH



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

- Population: 19,572 (2019)
- Households: 7,815 (2014-18)
- Median household income: \$42,267 (2014-18)
- Persons below poverty level: 16.4 percent (2018)

BUSINESS

- Total employer establishments: 666 (2018)
- Total employment: 5,047 (2014-18)
- Total non-employer establishments: 1,895 (2018)
- Total number of firms: 2,794 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

- Land area (square miles): 4,831
- Population per square mile: 4.2 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CAPITAN MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS
519 Smokey Bear Blvd.,
Capitan, NM 88316
P.O. Box 278, Capitan, NM 88316
575-354-8500
www.capitantigers.org

CARRIZOZO MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

800 D Ave., Carrizozo, NM 88301
P.O. Box 99, Carrizozo, NM 88301
575-648-2346
cms-k12-mt.schoolloop.com

CORONA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

531 Franklin St.,
Corona, NM 88318
P.O. Box 258
575-849-1911
www.cpiscardinals.org

HONDO VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
111 Don Pablo Lane,
Hondo, NM 88336
575-653-4411
www.hondoreagles.org

RUIDOSO MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

200 Horton Circle,
Ruidoso, NM 88345
575-630-7000
www.ruidososchools.org

UNIVERSITIES/ COLLEGES

EASTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY-RUIDOSO
709 Mechem Drive,
Ruidoso, NM 88345
575-257-7222
575-315-1120
www.ruidoso.enmu.edu

LINCOLN COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ALTO
Population: 2,647 (2018)

CAPITAN
Village
Population: 1,425 (2018)

CARRIZOZO
Town, County seat
Population: 935

CORONA
Village
Population: 163

FORT STANTON
State historical site
Population: 41

HONDO
Census-designated place
Population: 341

LINCOLN
State historical site
Population: 189 (2018)

RUIDOSO
Village
Population: 7,901

RUIDOSO DOWNS
City
Population: 2,574

SAN PATRICIO
Town Population: 564

WHITE OAKS
Ghost town Population:
Undetermined

Nogal
Census-designated place
Population: 96

ELECTED OFFICIALS

LINCOLN COUNTY COMMISSION

300 Central Ave., P.O. Box 338,
Carrizozo, NM 88301
Phone: 574-648-2394

DISTRICT 1

Todd F. Proctor
P.O. Box 484, Capitan, NM 8836
575-808-0729

DISTRICT 2

Lynn Willard
109 Nogal Place, Ruidoso, NM 88345
575-404-1794
lynnwillardlincolncounty@gmail.com

DISTRICT 3

Jon Floyd Crunk
113 Alpine Village Road,
Ruidoso, NM 88345
575-937-4790

DISTRICT 4

Tom Stewart
P.O. Box 515, Alto, NM 88312
575-973-7363
tstewart@lincolncountynm.gov

DISTRICT 5

Elaine Allen
P.O. Box 74, Lincoln, NM 88338
575-653-4251
eeaela@yahoo.com

RUIDOSO DOWNS CITY COUNCIL

123 Downs Drive,
Ruidoso Downs, NM 88346
575-378-4422,
cvirden@ruidosodowns.us

Dean Holman, Mayor
575-378-7068
gwilliams@ruidosodowns.us

Judy R. Miller, Mayor Pro-Tem
575-378-4823
575-937-4847
jrmjudy07@gmail.com

Shane Walker
575-626-7099
walkerref69@yahoo.com

Jimmy Romero
575-973-7094
jgromero.city@gmail.com

Sabrina Lundquist
575-973-7094

VILLAGE OF RUIDOSO COUNCIL

313 Cree Meadows Dr.,
Ruidoso, NM 88345
Phone: 575-257-4343

Lynn D. Crawford, Mayor
575-258-4343
lynnrcrawford@ruidoso-nm.gov

Rafael "Rifle" Salas
575-808-0430
riflesalas@ruidoso-nm.gov

Dr. Gary Jackson
575-973-2885
garyjackson@ruidoso-nm.gov

Joseph W. Eby
575-808-0114
joeeby@ruidoso-nm.gov

Tim Coughlin
575-937-5469
timothycoughlin@ruidoso-nm.gov

Susan Lutterman
575-973-8338
susanlutterman@ruidoso-nm.gov

John Cornelius
575-937-0918
johncornelius@ruidoso-nm.gov





PHOTOS BY EVA ÖSTERREICH



Luna County

Home of political harmony?

As the nation grows more and more politically divided, and members of both major parties wonder if there can ever be a time where lawmakers can successfully work together across the aisles, maybe Luna County can be a model citizenry.

As husband and wife, John and Candie Sweetser reach across the breakfast table each morning. However, Candie's a Democrat and John is Republican. Both won competitive elections in Luna County. Candie retained her District 32 state representative seat, and John kept his District 3 position on the Luna County Commission.

After 31 years in office, Deming's John Arthur Smith lost in the June 2020 Democratic primary for the District 35 state senate seat. In the general election, Smith reached across the aisle to endorse Republican candidate Crystal Diamond, who won, and now takes over the Dist. 35 senator spot.

Citizens of Deming and Luna County are perhaps less concerned about party affiliation, and more about the community rebounding from the pandemic setbacks of 2020.



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

- Population: 23,709 (2019)
- Households: 9,025 (2014-18)
- Median household income: \$27,377 (2014-18)
- Persons below poverty level: 27.2

BUSINESS

- Total employer establishments: 379 (2018)
- Total employment: 4,437 (2018)
- Total non-employer establishments: 978 (2018)
- Total number of firms: 1,353 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

- Land area (square miles): 2,965
- Population per square mile: 8.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



ELECTED OFFICIALS

LUNA COUNTY COMMISSION

700 S. Silver Ave., P.O. Box 1838,
Deming, NM 88031
Phone: 575-546-0491

DISTRICT 1

Barbara Reedy
575-544-5976
barbara_reedy@lunacountynm.us

DISTRICT 2

Linda Smrkovsky
575-494-0512
linda_smrkovsky@lunacountynm.us

DISTRICT 3

John Sweetser
575-546-1597
farman@swnm.com

DEMING CITY COUNCIL

309 S. Gold Ave., Ste. 3,
Deming, NM 88030
575-546-8848
www.cityofdeming.org

MAYOR

Benny L. Jasso
575-546-8848

DISTRICT 1

David L. Sanchez
575-546-3155
dsanchez505@q.com

DISTRICT 2

Irmisela "Irma" Rodriguez
575-546-8848
deming@cityofdeming.org

DISTRICT 3

Joe "Butter" Milo,
Mayor Pro-Tem
575-546-7385
deming@cityofdeming.org

DISTRICT 4

Victor Cruz
575-546-8848
valuemedicalcare@gmail.com

LUNA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

COLUMBUS

Population: 1,617 (2019)

DEMING

County Seat
Population: 13,880 (2019)

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

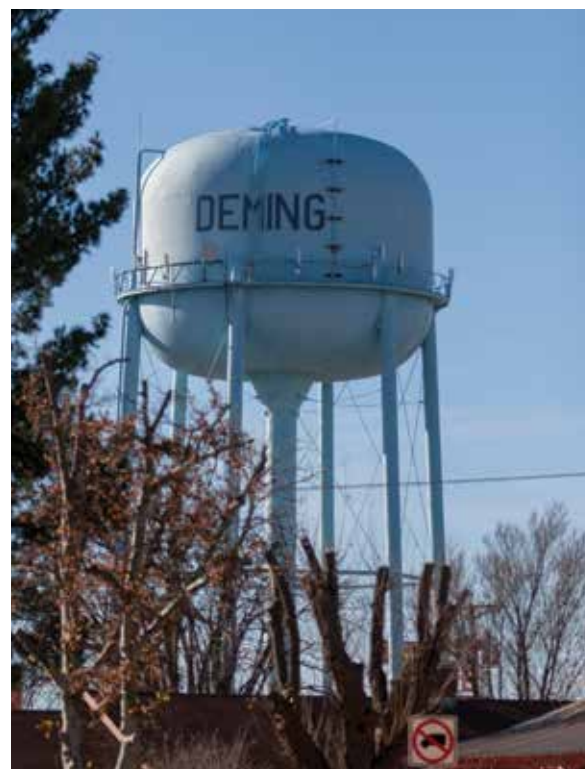
DEMING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1001 S. Diamond Ave.,
Deming, NM 88030
575-546-8841
www.demingps.org
Add Superintendent:
Arsenio Romero, Ph.D.

UNIVERSITIES

MIMBRES VALLEY LEARNING CENTER (WNMU)

2300 E. Pine St.,
Deming, NM 88030
575-546-6556
extended.wnmu.edu/deming/



Otero County

Holloman AFB looking solid

“I don’t think Holloman Air Force Base has ever been more secure in its missions than it is today,” said State Senator Bill Burt, who has been involved with Alamogordo-area military issues for 30 years. “There are three squadrons flying and training aircraft. The Air Force has said it will keep the F-16 in inventory until at least 2030.”

Just as critical to Holloman’s mission is its training center for remotely piloted aircraft.

“All Air Force RPA training is done here at Holloman,” Burt said. “Those two major missions at Holloman are rock solid right now. And there are many smaller missions on base. Holloman is a critical part of defense of this nation.”

As a result, economic opportunity in the form of more retail has come into Alamogordo in the last couple of years, including Hobby Lobby, Marshall’s, Ross, Tractor Supply, Harbor Freight and more.

“The more stability at the base, the more families we have to support local businesses,” Burt said.



PHOTOS BY ELVA ÖSTERNEICH



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 67,490 (2019)
Households: 23,391 (2014-18)
Median household income: \$42,752 (2014-18)
Persons below poverty level: 20.3 percent

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 951 (2018)
Total non-employer establishments: 3,414 (2018)
Total employment: 11,514 (2018)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 6,613.21
Population per square mile: 9.6 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov

ELECTED OFFICIALS

OTERO COUNTY COMMISSION

1101 New York Ave.,
 Alamogordo, NM 88310
 575-437-7427
 www.co.otero.nm.us

DISTRICT 1
Gerald Ray Matherly
 575-491-4836

DISTRICT 2
Couy Dale Griffin
 575-491-3359

DISTRICT 3
Vickie Pruiett Marquardt

ALAMOGORDO CITY COMMISSION

1376 E. Ninth St.,
 Alamogordo, NM 88310
 575-439-4100
 ci.alamogordo.nm.us

Richard A. Boss, Mayor
 575-214-0024
 rboss@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

■ OTERO CONTINUED ON PAGE 73



EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ALAMOGORDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
1211 Hawaii Ave.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-812-6000
www.aps4kids.org

CLOUDCROFT MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS

10 Swallow Place,
Cloudcroft, NM 88317
P.O. BOX 198
575-601-4416
www.cmsbears.org

TULAROSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

504 First St.,
Tularosa, NM 88352
575-585-8800
www.tularosak12.us

MESCALERO APACHE SCHOOL

249 White Mountain Drive
Mescalero, NM 88340
575-464-4431
www.maschiefs.org

NM SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

1900 N. White Sands Blvd.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-437-3505
www.nmsbvi.k12.nm.us

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

ST. FRANCES CABRINI CATHOLIC SCHOOL
Grades PreK – 6
1000 E. Eighth St.,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-437-7821
www.stfccatholic.org

IMAGO DEI ACADEMY

Classical Christian School
Grades K-12
3601 N. Scenic Drive,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-434-3903
www.imagodei.academy

LEGACY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

Private, Catholic, Grades K-12
3001 Thunder Road,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-434-0352
www.legacychristianacademy-edu.com

UNIVERSITIES/COLLEGES

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY -ALAMOGORDO
2400 North Scenic Drive,
Alamogordo, NM 88310
575-439-3600
www.nmsua.edu



PARK UNIVERSITY

4th St. #203,
Holloman AFB, NM 88330
575-479-2337
a2e.park.edu/location/
park-university-at-holloman/

OTERO COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ALAMOGORDO

City, County Seat
Population: 31,980

BENT

Unincorporated community
Population: 56 (2018)

BOLES ACRES

Census-designated place
Population: 1,899 (2018)

CHAPARRAL

Unincorporated community
Population: 14,793

CLOUDCROFT

Population: 701 (2018)

HIGH ROLLS-MOUNTAIN PARK

Unincorporated Community
Population: 767 (2018)

HOLLOMAN AFB

Census-designated place
Population: 21,000 Active

LA LUZ

Census-designated place
Population: 1,472 (2018)

MAYHILL

Unincorporated community
Population: 59 (2018)

MESCALERO

Census-designated place
Population: 1,361 (2018)

NEWMAN

Unincorporated community
Population: Unavailable

OROGRANDE

Unincorporated community
Population: 91 (2018)

PIÑON

Unincorporated community
Population: 71

SACRAMENTO

Population: 118 (2018)

SUNSPOT

Unincorporated community
Population: 12 (2018)

THREE RIVERS

Unincorporated community
Population: 119

TIMBERON

Census-designated place
Population: 301 (2018)

TULAROSA

Village Population: 3,006 (2018)
Mayor: Margaret Trujillo

WEED

Unincorporated community
Population: 63

ELECTED OFFICIALS CONT.

OTERO CONTINUED FROM PAGE 72

DISTRICT 1

Jason Baldwin,
Mayor pro-tem
575-921-1093
jbaldwin@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

DISTRICT 2

Nadia Sikes
575-491-7910
nsikes@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

DISTRICT 3

Susan Payne
575-491-2011
spayne@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

DISTRICT 4

Josh Rardin
575-434-0720
jrdardin@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

DISTRICT 5

Sharon McDonald
575-446-9911
ahernandez@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

DISTRICT 6

Dusty Wright
575-430-3395
dwright@ci.alamogordo.nm.us

TULAROSA VILLAGE COUNCIL

705 St. Francis Drive,
Tularosa, NM 88352
575-585-2771
villageoftularosa.com

Margaret Trujillo, Mayor
575-585-2771

Janie Portillo, Mayor pro-tem
575-585-2771

Jeni "Bebe" Flores, Trustee
575-585-2771

Patrick Garcia, Trustee
575-585-2771

Robert Sainz, Trustee
575-585-2771

CLOUDCROFT VILLAGE COUNCIL

201 Burro Ave.,
Cloudcroft, NM 88317
P.O. Box 317
575-682-2411
villageofcloudcroftnm.onet

Bill Denney, Mayor
villageofcloudcroft@
tularosa.net
billd@ote-coop.com

John Tieman,
Mayor Pro-tem
villageofcloudcroft@
tularosa.net

Bruce Smaga, Trustee
bsmaga@nso.edu

James Maynard, Trustee
jmaynard@greenmtn.com

George Mitchell, Trustee
villageofcloudcroft@
tularosa.net

Sierra County

Hotsprings, high tech

Reduced water levels and the global pandemic slowed down visitation and recreation at Elephant Butte State Park and reservoir.

In the meantime, at another Sierra County landmark, Spaceport America continued to draw attention from aerospace and technology companies interested in using the facility for projects, testing and ongoing use.

Many New Mexicans, weary of Covid fatigue, passed up out-of-state vacations and headed to Truth or Consequences for a de-stressing soak.



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 10,791 (2019)
Households: 4,377 (2014-18)
Median household income: \$30,451 (2014-18)
Persons below poverty level: 25.7 percent

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 217 (2016)
Total non-employer establishments: 733 (2018)
Total employment: 2,376 (2018)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 4,178
Population per square mile: 2.9 (2010)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



ELECTED OFFICIALS

SIERRA COUNTY COMMISSION

855 Van Patten St.,
Truth or Consequences, NM 87901
575-894-6215
www.sierraco.org

James Paxon, District 1
jpaxon@sierraco.org

Travis Day, District 2
tday@sierraco.org

William H. Hopkins, District 3

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES CITY COMMISSION

505 Sims St.,
Truth or Consequences, NM 87901
575-894-6673
www.torcnm.org

Sandra Whitehead, Mayor
sandra.whitehead@torcnm.org

Amanda Forrister, Mayor pro-tem
amanda.forrister@torcnm.org

Randall Aragon, Commissioner
randall.aragon@torcnm.org

Paul Baca, Commissioner
paul.baca@torcnm.org

George Szigeti, Commissioner
gszigeti@torcnm.org

Frances Luna, Commissioner
fluna@torcnm.org

ELEPHANT BUTTE CITY COUNCIL

103 Water Ave.,
Elephant Butte, NM 87935
575-744-4892
www.cityofelephantbutte.com

Edna Trager, Mayor
edna.trager@cityofelephantbutte.com

Kim Skinner, Mayor pro-tem
kim.skinner@cityofelephantbutte.com

Gerald LaFont, Councilor
gerald.lafont@cityofelephantbutte.com

Michael Williams, Councilor
575-744-4892

Travis Atwell, Councilor
travis.atwell@cityofelephantbutte.com

VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSBURG BOARD OF TRUSTEES

309 Veater St.,
Williamsburg, NM 87942
575-894-6385
www.villageofwilliamsburg.com

Deb Stubblefield, Mayor
mayor@villageofwilliamsburg.com

Majorie Powey, Mayor Pro-tem
mpowey@villageofwilliamsburg.com

Guillermo Hernandez, Trustee
ghernandez@villageofwilliamsburg.com

SIERRA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

DERRY

Census-designated place
Population: 114

ELEPHANT BUTTE

City Population: 1,324 (2018)

ENGLE

Census-designated place
Population: Unavailable

HILLSBORO

Census-designated place
Population: 121 (2018)

HOT SPRINGS LANDING

Census-designated place
Population: 1110

KINGSTON

Census-designated place
Population: 32

LAKE VALLEY

Census-designated place
Population: 63 (2016 estimate)

LAS PALOMAS

Census-designated place
Population: 173

LAS PLACITAS

Census-designated place
Population: 576

MONTICELLO

Census-designated place
Population: 87

OASIS

Census-designated place
Population: 149

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES

City Population: 5,753

UPHAM

Unincorporated community
Population: 1,650 (2019)

WILLIAMSBURG

Village Population: 413 (2018)

WINSTON

Census-designated place
Population: 64 (2018)

EDUCATION

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS
910 N. Date St.,
Truth or Consequences, NM 87901
575-894-8166
torschools.net

UNIVERSITIES/ COLLEGES

WESTERN NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY
GARDNER LEARNING CENTER
601 Sunset St.,
Truth or Consequences, NM 87901
575-538-6369
extended.wnmu.edu/torc



WESTERN
NEW MEXICO UNIVERSITY

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico

SIERRA COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ARREY

Census-designated place
Population: 232

CABALLO

Census-designated place
Population: 112

CHLORIDE

Ghost town Population: 11

CUCHILLO

Census-designated place
Population: 35

CUTTER

Census-designated place
Population: Unavailable

Socorro County

Emerging from the virus

Though there had been less than 1,000 cases of Covid-19 in Socorro County by the end of 2020, the pandemic's presence was unavoidable.

In April the boys basketball coach at Alamo Navajo High School, Marcus Pino, died with Covid complications at age 42. Within six weeks, his father, Ira, and his mother, Marie, a longtime teacher, had also passed with the disease. It was a stark reminder how the disease has affected Native Americans.

New Mexico Tech rose early to the challenges of Covid, mobilizing its biology department to produce hand sanitizer that made its way all over the state, including Navajo reservations.



QUICK FACTS

PEOPLE

Population: 16,637 (2019)
Households: 4,550 (2014-18)
Median household income: \$36,146 (2014-18)
Persons below poverty level: 29.6 percent

BUSINESS

Total employer establishments: 239 (2018)
Total employment: 3,114 (2018)
Total non-employer establishments: 725 (2018)
Total number of firms: 961 (2012)

GEOGRAPHY

Land area (square miles): 6,646.68
Population per square mile: 2.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, www.census.gov



ELECTED OFFICIALS

SOCORRO COUNTY COMMISSION

Socorro County Annex, 198
Neel Avenue,
Socorro NM 87801
575-835-0589
www.socorrocounty.net

DISTRICT 3
Manuel Anaya, Vice chair
575-835-0589 x1113
575-418-0234 (cell)
manaya@co.socorro.nm.us

DISTRICT 1
Joe Gonzales, District 1
575-835-0589 x1111
jgonzales@co.socorro.nm.us

DISTRICT 4
Glen Duggins
575-835-0589 x1114
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glend@co.socorro.nm.us

DISTRICT 2
Craig D. Secatero
575-835-0589 x1112

DISTRICT 5
Ray Martinez
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575-418-7261 (cell)
rmartinez@co.socorro.nm.us

SOCORRO CITY COUNCIL

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Socorro, NM 87801
575-835-0240
www.socorronm.gov

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575-835-2973
ghicks@socorronm.gov

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rbhasker@socorronm.gov

Toby Jaramillo
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Mary Ann Chavez-Lopez
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Deborah Dean
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Nick Fleming
575-835-2744
nfleming@socorronm.gov

Anton Salome
575-518-8866
asalome@socorronm.gov

SOCORRO COUNTY COMMUNITIES

ABEYTAS
Census-designated place
Population: 63 (2016
estimate)

MAGDALENA
Population: 878 (2018)

ALAMO
Census-designated place
Population: 742 (2018)

POLVADERA
Census-designated place
Population: 225 (2018)

BINGHAM
Census-designated place
Population: Unavailable

SAN ACACIA
Census-designated place
Population: 66

CHAMIZAL
Census-designated place
Population: 76 (2018)

SAN ANTONIO
Census-designated place
Population: 165

CLAUNCH
Census-designated place
Population: 64

SAN ANTONITO
Census-designated place
Population: 1,179 (2018)

ESCONDIDA
Census-designated place
Population: 31 (2018)

SOCORRO
City
Population: 8,751 (2014
estimate)

LEMITAR
Census-designated place
Population: 459 (2018)

VEGUITA
Census-designated place
Population: 263
(2016 estimate)

LUIS LOPEZ
Census-designated place
Population: 191 (2018)

EDUCATION

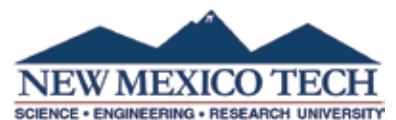
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CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS
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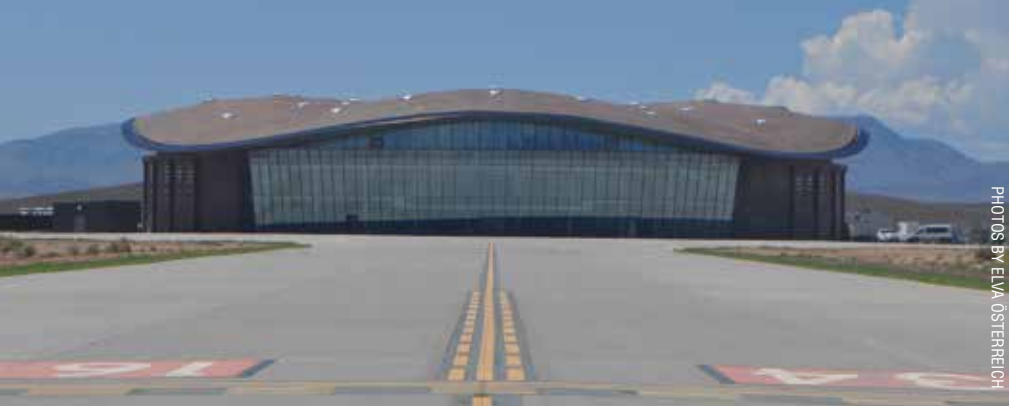
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valley.org

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PHOTOS BY ELVA ÖSTERREICH

Spaceport signing deals

BY ELVA K. ÖSTERREICH

The Business of commercial space is booming at Spaceport America, despite the Spaceport Authority losing both its CEO and CFO in 2020.

"The commercial space industry is growing rapidly, and New Mexico is still an important player with many competitive advantages" said Spaceport America's Interim Director Scott McLaughlin. "Spaceport America is a key player in helping diversify our local economy and help foster good, well-paying jobs."

Despite the global pandemic, the aerospace industry has continued to expand and meet new milestones in 2020 according to Alice Carruth with the Spaceport Authority. CNBC has said the aerospace industry is worth over \$423 billion with 183,000 jobs in the field. Spaceport America customers currently employ over 250 people in New Mexico, a number which is expected to reach over 300 by the end of 2021.

Some of the most respected companies in the commercial space industry are tenants at Spaceport America including Virgin Galactic, HAPSMobile/AeroVironment, UP Aerospace, and SpinLaunch. Other customers include Boeing, EXOS Aerospace and C6 Launch Systems.

One of the existing tenants, SpinLaunch, signed a lease at Spaceport America in 2019 and has since invested in test facilities and an integration facility. The company is now set to hire an additional 59 highly-paid workers and complete the build of its suborbital centrifugal launch system for its next phase of development. SpinLaunch expects to start test launches in New Mexico in 2021.

The company expected to spend \$46 million of private money in construction and expansion over 10 years, will generate an economic impact of \$239 million over that period of time statewide.

The State of New Mexico, through the Economic Development Department's LEDA job-creators fund, is supporting the expansion with \$4 million, paid out in phases as SpinLaunch reaches economic development goals.

"Spaceport America is the next frontier for innovation," Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said in a news release. "It is a magnet for companies on the cutting edge and New Mexico is glad for their partnership with and investment in our state. We've only begun scratching the surface of what's possible in aerospace technology in Southern New Mexico."

C6 Launch Systems plans to begin work at Spaceport America in January 2021. Over a six-week period, the Canadian rocket company will install a new vertical test stand and conduct system integration tests including several engine firings at Spaceport America. These tests will validate the avionics, engine control, ground control and communications subsystems.

Spaceport America expects to begin capital improvement projects in the early part of 2021 to include Spaceport Operations Center (SOC) repairs, construction of a Spaceport Technology and Reception Center (STARC), purchasing a vertical launch area rail and vertical launch area improvements. These improvements have already been approved by the legislature and the Spaceport America Board of Directors.

AN OVERVIEW OF CUSTOMERS AT SPACEPORT AMERICA IN 2020:

- **Virgin Galactic** - WhiteKnightTwo and SpaceShipTwo arrived at their permanent home at Spaceport America in February 2020. They held three test flights in 2020 - May, June and December. Michael Colglazier was announced as the new CEO in July. Virgin Galactic now employs over 180 people in Southern New Mexico and is on track to begin commercial operations in 2021.
- In March 2020 **HAPSMobile** and aircraft development partner **AeroVironment** signed an agreement to build a test facility at the north side of our horizontal launch area. They invested more than \$8 million in constructing their facility and airstrip, had 35 people on site from June-November and completed two successful test flights of the Sunlider in July and September.
- **SpinLaunch** is nearing completion of the construction of the world's largest evacuated centrifuge at the Advanced Technology Area. They announced an expansion at Spaceport America in December with 59 new positions expected to be hired in the coming months. SpinLaunch is expected to invest \$46 million for construction and expansion at Spaceport America in the next 10 years. They expect to begin testing by the end of 2021.
- **UP Aerospace** have held 14 launches at Spaceport America since 2006. They held motor testing at Spaceport America over the summer. UP works with the NASA flight opportunities program and expects to hold their next launch at Spaceport America later this year.
- In partnership with NASA's Ames Research Center, **Swift Engineering's** high altitude long endurance (HALE) unmanned aerial system, completed its maiden flight on 7/7/20.
- **Sugarhouse Aerospace** held a launch at Spaceport America in May 2020.
- NMSU student rocket team Atomic Aggies held two successful rocket launches at Spaceport America in September.
- Spaceport America announced two new customers to begin testing in early 2021 - **C6 Launch Systems** will be holding static motor tests and **Stratodynamics** with partners from the University of Kentucky will be holding tests in the coming weeks.
- The 2020 Spaceport America Cup was canceled due to COVID-19. A decision on the 2021 Cup will be made in the coming weeks.

NMSU study finds state scores low in economic diversity

BY MIKE COOK

A report written by a professor and a doctoral student in New Mexico State University's Department of Economics, Applied Statistics and International Business shows that New Mexico continues to rank in the bottom 10 among states in terms of economic diversity.

The report, written by NMSU professor Richard V. Adkisson, who holds the Garrey E. and Katherine T. Carruthers Endowed Chair in Economic Development, and Sajid Al Noor, a candidate for a doctor of Economic Development degree, was completed in December 2018 and released this month as part of the NMSU Arrowhead Center's annual release of economic base studies.

The purposes of the studies include understanding regional economic growth, short- and long-term forecasts, identification of potential growth sectors and identification of potential problem areas, NMSU said in a Nov. 20 news release. The studies also give an indication of an area's strength compared to the state and the nation.

Here are some of the study's findings:

- 2006-12, New Mexico ranked 41st in economic diversity compared to the U.S. as a whole.

For 2016, New Mexico is ranked 42nd using the Hachman index, 47th using Herfindahl-Hirschman and 45th using the Entropy Index. (The Hachman Index, developed by Frank Hachman, was first published by the University of Utah's Bureau of Business and Economic Research in 1994. The index measures the extent to which a region's employment distribution resembles that of a reference area. The NMSU study calculated the Hachman Index for all 50 states for 11 years, 2006-16. The Herfindahl-Hirschman and Entropy indices compare a state only to itself.)

- During 2013, 2014 and 2015, New Mexico's ranking decreased to 42nd, 43rd and 44th, indicating that the state gradually became relatively less economically diverse. The ranking increased slightly in 2016 from 42nd. States with the highest rankings were Georgia, Illinois, North Carolina, California and Utah. These states have had consistently diverse industrial structures over the 2006-16 period. States consistently ranked near New Mexico during this period

are Arkansas, Iowa, Hawaii and Montana.

- The Hachman Index was the highest for New Mexico in 2009, meaning that the employment distribution among industries in New Mexico was most like the United States' distribution during that year. After the 2007-09 Great Recession, New Mexico's Hachman Index fell, indicating less relative diversity, until 2015 when it turned upward again. Despite these changes, New Mexico's ranking among states did not change significantly.

“Hospitals, nursing, and residential care facilities grew in share from 2.01 to 2.7 percent. Mining (except oil and gas) nearly doubled its share from 0.97 to 1.91 percent.”

- The top 10 industries for employment in New Mexico during the study period were 1) state and local government (13.52 percent of state employment in 2001, 12.25 percent in 2008, 12.61 in 2016); 2) real estate (10.07 percent in 2001, 9.06 percent in 2008, 12.42 percent in 2016); 3) federal civilian government (7.91 percent in 2001, 9.20 percent in 2008, 7.17 percent in 2016); 4) retail trade (6.86 percent in 2001, 6.78 percent in 2008, 6.19 percent in 2016), 5) computer and electronic product manufacturing (5.36 percent in 2001, 5.82 percent in both 2008 and 2016); 6) oil and gas extraction (4.83 percent in 2001, 5.74 percent in 2008, 4.93 percent in 2016); 7) Miscellaneous professional, scientific and technical services (4.62 percent in 2001, 5.02 percent in 2008, 3.9 percent in 2016); 8) construction (4.39 percent in 2001, 3.38 percent in 2008, 3.81 percent in 2016), 9) wholesale trade (3.8 percent in 2001, 3.33

percent in 2008, 3.8 percent in 2016); and 10) military (3.48 percent in 2001, 3.09 percent in 2008, 3.25 percent in 2016).

- Notable positive changes in employment share over the period of the study ambulatory health care services' share growth from 2.7 to 3.9 percent of total employment. Hospitals, nursing, and residential care facilities grew in share from 2.01 to 2.7 percent. Mining (except oil and gas) nearly doubled its share from 0.97 to 1.91 percent. Two industries were in the top 25 group in 2016 that were not there in 2001, social assistance and motion picture and sound recording industries, the latter reaching nearly two percent of state employment in 2016.

- Among industries that decreased in their share, the most precipitous decline was in computer and electronic product manufacturing, which dropped from fifth to 23rd in ranking and 5.36 percent to 1.12 percent in employment share. Wholesale trade and broadcasting and telecommunications had more modest declines in employment share. The petroleum and coal products manufacturing and publishing industries dropped out of the top 25 industries by 2016.

- Conclusions. By its choice of economic incentives and other policies it seems that New Mexico is actively seeking to diversify its economy. Looking at the overall level of diversification as measured by the Hachman, Herfindahl-Hirschman, and Entropy indices, it appears that New Mexico has become only slightly more economically diverse over the 2001-16 period. While progress has been made, other states have progressed too, making it difficult to move up in the diversity rankings.

In terms of employment shares there have been a few notable changes within the state with decreases in some industries being offset by increased shares in other industries. Realistically, New Mexico, as any other state, has its own unique characteristics that shape its economy. While the pursuit of economic diversity is worthwhile in many ways, it may be unreasonable to expect New Mexico, or any other state, to change its diversity ranking significantly in a short amount of time.

To access the studies, visit <https://arrowheadcenter.nmsu.edu/economic-and-policy-studies/>.

Outdoor economy contributed \$2.4 billion to state's economy

BY MIKE COOK

New Mexico's outdoor economy contributed \$2.4 billion (2.2 percent) to the state's gross domestic product in 2019, the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis said in a report issued Nov. 11 by the New Mexico Economic Development Department (NMEDD).

The report showed that the industry provided 35,065 jobs in New Mexico, with \$1.2 billion in total income.

At the national level, the data shows that the outdoor recreation economy accounted for \$459.8 billion (2.1 percent) of U.S. GDP in 2019.

Here are highlights from the report:

- New Mexico's outdoor recreation economy growth – 5.9 percent since 2018 – is outpacing the national growth -- 3.7 percent.
- Employment in the industry is expanding much faster in New Mexico than nationally. Since 2018, the number of outdoor recreation jobs in the state has grown by 5.3 percent, compared to 0.4 percent growth nationally.
- Since 2018, outdoor recreation income has grown 7.6 percent in New Mexico, compared with an increase of 3.9 percent for the U.S.
- In 2019, RVing, equestrian and snow sports were the top three contributors to New Mexico's outdoor economy, followed closely by boating and fishing.

“We know the outdoor economy is a powerhouse in New Mexico, employing over 35,000 people annually,” New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD) Director Axie Navas said.

ORD was created July 1, 2019, as NMEDD's sixth division. Legislation creating the department was sponsored by state Sen. Jeff Steinborn, D-Doña Ana, and co-sponsored by state Reps. Nathan Small and Angelica Rubio.

“As is clear from this new report, New Mexico has a great opportunity to grow our reputation and jobs as a top outdoor recreation destination in the country,” Steinborn said. “Locally we are very well positioned

to make outdoor recreation a much bigger part of our economy by promoting our nearby national monuments and parks, the Rio Grande Trail and incredible recreational opportunities like the Monumental Loop Bikepacking Trail. The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division will be an essential partner to help us protect and promote these assets.”

The division's multi-faceted mission mandates that nearly a dozen governmental entities work together to create jobs

and promote public health, conservation and “preservation of New Mexico's special places,” Steinborn said in 2019. He said it will help cities, counties and tribes across the state improve, promote and preserve their “great public lands and national ameni-

ties for people to enjoy.”

“The COVID-19 health crisis has hurt many of our businesses in this space – a fact not captured in this new tranche of data,” Navas said. “It's our job to aid in the recovery of the outdoor industry, so it continues to be a vibrant economic engine in the state.”

In early 2020, ORD surveyed 128 outdoor recreation businesses in New Mexico. More than 90 percent of respondents said they had lost revenue and/or hadn't been able to cover basic expenses due to the pandemic-induced economic crisis. Almost 78 percent of respondents are small, local companies with fewer than 15 employees.

For more information, visit www.bea.gov/news/2020/outdoor-recreation-satellite-account-us-and-states-2019, <https://apps.bea.gov/data/special-topics/orsa/summary-sheets/ORSA%20-%20New%20Mexico.pdf> and www.nmoutside.com/covid19-response.



Sen. Jeff Steinborn

PHOTO BY ELVA OSTERREICH



State Cultural Affairs Department seeks \$31.5 million in funding

During Dec. 3 testimony before the state Legislative Finance Committee, New Mexico Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) Sec. Debra Garcia y Griego recommended \$31.5 million in DCA funding for FY22.

DCA “continues to serve New Mexicans throughout pandemic closures by raising its online presence, offering more programming across its department-run websites and social media channels and increasing participation from state residents, in particular those from areas outside the Rio Grande corridor,” Garcia y Griego said. “These virtual programs include at-home educational kits, youth summer camps, inviting a DCA educator into a classroom setting, concerts and museum exhibition tours.”

DCA has also provided relief funding to cultural organizations, the secretary said. New Mexico Arts Division awarded \$1.5 million in state and federal funds to about

200 arts organizations, colleges and universities, schools, tribal governments and government entities across the state. A third of the funding went to organizations based in rural communities.

“The funds will be used for online arts programming and services, to assist with the retention of full- and part-time jobs and to support independently-contracted artists, arts administrators and arts educators,” Garcia y Griego said.

The New Mexico State Library granted \$630,000 to expand direct program delivery to rural areas of the state through infrastructure investments, including free and dependable internet access to 27 additional communities. With a goal of 100 percent participation by 2023, 60 percent of New Mexico’s public and tribal libraries now use the E-Rate program.

DCA also utilized public closures due to state public health orders to complete cap-

ital improvement projects, including renovations to the planetarium at the New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science, new elevators at the New Mexico Museum of Space History and renovations to the main windmill tower at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum.

“The funding is vital to ensuring the agency’s ability to serve its mission by providing a broad range of cultural services, including libraries, E-Rate broadband funding, arts education programs, historic preservation, archaeological research, collection and preservation of cultural resources, and operating the state’s 16 museums and historic sites,” Garcia y Griego said.

DAC was created by the state Legislature in 1978 to serve as New Mexico’s to preserve and showcase the state’s cultural assets. With its eight museums, seven historic sites, arts, archaeology, historic preservation and library programs, DCA is one of the largest and most diverse state cultural agencies in the nation. Its facilities, programs and services support a \$5.6 billion cultural industry statewide.



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PHOTO BY EVA OSTERREICH

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