



RE: Support HJR 2 Denial of Bail, CA

Mr./Madame Chair and Committee Members:

The New Mexico Business Coalition (NMBC) represents hundreds of businesses and thousands of New Mexicans. We focus on making New Mexico a better place to live and work, with abundant good-paying jobs to provide for our families.

We support HJR 9 Denial of Bail, CA. It would allow voters to correct language from a misunderstood constitutional amendment that passed in 2020 that produced severe unintended consequences. We have seen the terrible harm that violent offenders released 'on their own recognizance' pending trial has created. The crime rate in New Mexico has increased significantly leaving many residents afraid to live here.

As it is now, judges are routinely forced or choose to release individuals back into the community who have been charged with violent crimes. This includes accused perpetrators of murder, rape, child abuse, and more. We've seen too many times that this 'catch and release' system ends in further crimes committed, lives lost, and families destroyed.

From a business perspective, New Mexico's crime rate has become nationally notable and an embarrassment to our state. To say the least, too many businesses are closing outright or choosing to leave New Mexico so they can open businesses where they are not at such a high risk of robbery, theft, and endangering their employees. While this bill is aimed at the worst offenders, it should have a positive impact on all crime.

We urge you to vote "YES" on HJR 2 Denial of Bail, CA.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Carla J. Sonntag
President & CEO