



Analysis and Commentary on Governor Lujan Grisham's 2022 Legislative Agenda

EDUCATION

- **Providing raises for educators:** The governor [has proposed](#) and is advocating for 7 percent raises for all public school education personnel, as well as increases to base educator salary levels in the state's three-tier licensure system, raising minimum teacher salary levels to \$50,000, \$60,000, and \$70,000, representing an average 35% total increase in base salary levels since the Lujan Grisham administration came into office. These raises would follow a 6 percent raise for public school staff authorized by the Lujan Grisham administration and Legislature in 2019 and a 2 percent increase authorized in 2020.
 - ***NMBC supports our teachers and public school personnel being fairly compensated. However, as we have repeatedly pointed out for the past 10 years, there have been millions of dollars of increased spending without accountability for improved student outcomes. Continuing to increase funding for pay raises or otherwise, without measurable standards/expectations for better results, is not helping our children.***
- **Making free college a reality:** Through expansion of the Opportunity Scholarship created in 2020, the governor proposes to permanently remove financial barriers to higher education for New Mexico students, ensuring that New Mexicans are not forced to choose between financial security and furthering their education. The proposed \$85.5 million increase in the Opportunity Scholarship program will cover tuition costs for all New Mexico students of higher education, including non-traditional students and those seeking credit-bearing certificates. An estimated 22,000 additional New Mexicans will be able to achieve their educational goals because of this funding.
 - ***This is an unsustainable proposal without raising taxes on hard working families already struggling to put food on the table during the worst U.S. inflation of 40 years. This initiative includes 'non-traditional' students and illegal 'residents' of our state.***
 - ***Because it is the New Mexico taxpayers who will most likely cover these costs through tax increases, we consider this to be an unfair and inequitable proposition.***



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CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

- **Creating a fund to hire and train more public safety officers:** [Investing \\$100 million in a new law enforcement recruitment fund](#) with the goal of hiring and training 1,000 new police officers statewide in coming years will reduce the competition between local agencies for personnel and support new recruiting initiatives. Public safety agencies at the state, municipal and county level will be able to access the funding to support hiring and retention and will be required to train new hires supported by the fund in community policing and de-escalation techniques.
 - *It was the governor's prior policy decisions that created these issues. She supported laws that made it easier for police officers to be personally sued over actions taken on the job. This has led to an increase in the number of officers leaving their jobs while making it harder to recruit new officers.*
 - *NMBC agrees with the need for more officers, but we must assure these funds are accessible to every state law enforcement agency and not just those selected by this administration to receive funds.*
 - *More importantly, we must assure the judicious use of the funds that provide better benefits so that officers will stay.*
- **Keeping violent offenders off New Mexico streets:** [Imposing a "rebuttable presumption"](#) will help to ensure that those accused of murder, gun crimes, rape or other sex crimes do not pose a danger to the community before being released pending trial.
 - *This is another policy error by the governor. Violent offenders never should have been allowed release and NMBC warned about the consequences when this legislation was passed.*
 - *NMBC supports correcting the legislation that has hurt the state by keeping violent offenders incarcerated.*
- **Increasing penalties for violent offenders:** [Increasing penalties](#) for second degree murder from 15 years to 18 years and removing the statute of limitations for that charge, in addition to increasing penalties for gun crimes, including increasing the penalty for unlawful possession of a handgun from misdemeanor to fourth degree felony; creating a crime of "criminal threat" as a fourth degree felony; adding penalty of third degree felony for fleeing law enforcement that results in injury and second degree felony for fleeing that results in great bodily harm; enhancing penalties for brandishing a firearm in the commission of a drug transaction.
 - *This is another bad policy initiative created by Governor MLG.*
 - *While this is a good first step in correcting deficiencies created by this administration, it should be a much bigger increase in penalties.*



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- ***NOTE regarding the governors focus on crime: There is no question that crime in our state, and in the City of Albuquerque in particular, is out of control and needs attention. However, for the past three years the majority party, under the governor's leadership, have blocked and killed numerous bills designed to address crime and judicial issues. It's nice to see the governor admit that this has been the wrong direction for the state and reverse direction. The need to address crime is long overdue.***

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Cutting gross receipts taxes for all New Mexicans:** The governor [has proposed](#) a statewide 0.25 percent reduction in the gross receipts tax rate, saving New Mexicans an estimated \$170 million annually. The statewide rate is currently 5.125 percent; the governor's proposal would reduce the statewide rate to 4.875 percent. This would be the first decrease of the state's gross receipts tax rate in 40 years. A gross receipts tax is levied on all persons engaged in business in New Mexico and is akin to a retail sales tax.
 - ***This proposition is nothing more than political pandering and amounts to 25 cents relief for every \$100 spent. Not a significant benefit to hardworking, overtaxed New Mexicans.***
 - ***The state needs comprehensive tax reform that will do away with gross receipts taxes and replace it with a sales tax that is flat, fair, and not overrun with exemptions.***
- **Expanding the Buy New Mexico Initiative:** The expansion of this initiative will support New Mexico businesses by increasing the business preference for in-state businesses in the state's procurement code from 5 percent to 8 percent. The legislation would also make tribal businesses eligible to receive in-state preference, which is not allowed under current law. The proposal will also further support state procurement preference for New Mexico veteran-owned businesses, removing a current sunset on 10% resident-veteran preference and removing the \$3 million revenue cap per veteran business.
 - ***NMBC supports promoting New Mexico businesses.***



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- **Establishing New Mexico as a national hydrogen hub:** The Hydrogen Hub Act will implement state economic and tax incentives, create a clean hydrogen workforce, foster research and studies into potential applications of clean hydrogen and establish legal and technical pathways for carbon sequestration and storage that will make New Mexico a regional and national “hub” for clean hydrogen production, storage, use and export – boosting the economy and moving the state’s energy in a greener direction.
 - ***This is a lofty idea that is uneconomical without government subsidies.***
 - ***Because the federal government is offering subsidies for hydrogen, this could provide economic diversification for our state.***
 - ***New Mexico has abundant natural gas, which could be used for this endeavor and save jobs. We hope that at no time will this administration look at using water as that is in extreme shortage in our state.***
 - ***Ultimately taxpayers can expect increased taxes due to significant ‘subsidizing’ and government handouts.***

- **Establishing a state Media Academy:** In collaboration with the Higher Education Department and Economic Development Department, the governor proposes dedicating \$50 million in capital outlay to create a Media Academy that better serves New Mexico students in the transition from education to employment in the state’s thriving film and media industry, providing training, internships, and other resources.
 - ***NMBC supports diversification in education and workforce development.***
 - ***There should be an increased emphasis of learning all trades and providing students with additional options for career preparation.***

- **Expanding job training and economic development programs:** To continue building on the state’s positive economic momentum, sustained despite the pandemic, the governor proposes increasing resources to the Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) and the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA). New Mexico’s JTIP and LEDA initiatives have collectively brought \$5 billion in new capital investment to New Mexico with a projected economic impact of \$30 billion since the governor took office.
 - ***This funding must be tied to strict requirements for expectations.***
 - ***Expectations not met by fund recipients must be cured with strict claw backs.***



NEW MEXICO BUSINESS COALITION

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ENVIRONMENT

- **Creating the Land of Enchantment Bond:** The governor [has proposed](#) a new conservation fund, to be seeded by a \$50 million general obligation bond that will be placed on the 2022 ballot and administered by the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department, which will allow the state of New Mexico to acquire land and conservation easements; manage natural and cultural resources; and enhance equitable access to outdoor recreation. An effort to sustain and support New Mexico's pristine natural beauty and world-renowned outdoors, the Land of Enchantment Bond will supplement ongoing administrative conservation and preservation efforts, including [Gov. Lujan Grisham's 30x30 executive order](#).
 - ***NMBC is opposed to this initiative which is both dangerous and unfair for hardworking New Mexicans.***
 - ***This is yet another tax increase to fund the governor's green initiatives.***
 - ***It will restrict economic development, wealth, and the wellbeing of all New Mexicans.***
 - ***The governor's 30x30 initiative is drastic overreach meant to support the bad policies of the Biden administration. New Mexico already has approximately 35 percent of the state controlled by the federal government.***

- **Reaching net-zero by 2050:** The Clean Future Act will establish the governor's ambitious climate goals in statute, ensuring the state continues its progress across administrations. The legislation also directs the Environment Department to implement further regulations to curb emissions across sectors.
 - ***This is more government regulation that will restrict economic development, wealth, and the wellbeing of New Mexicans.***
 - ***Currently this is an unreachable goal that is geared towards shutting down the oil and gas industry in New Mexico and creating further restrictions on all New Mexicans.***

- **Setting a clean fuel standard:** The Clean Fuel Standard Act will reduce the carbon footprint of New Mexico's transportation sector while contributing \$470 million in capital investments to New Mexico's economy and creating more than 1,600 permanent jobs and 4,100 construction jobs by 2030. By 2030, the Act will result in the cumulative reduction of transportation emissions by an estimated 18.5 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent – the equivalent of taking over 570,000 gas powered cars off the road for one year.
 - ***This amounts to another tax on New Mexicans.***
 - ***These standards will restrict the types of vehicles that can be purchased in the state, driving the vehicle business out of state and harming New Mexico businesses.***



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HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

- **Improving the New Mexico Veterans Home:** The state will seek to invest some \$60 million to [build brand new living quarters and improve existing facilities](#), supporting the health and well-being of those that served our country. The current main facility in Truth or Consequences is over 80 years old.
 - ***NMBC supports our veterans.***

- **Significantly expanding ballot access and support for the right to vote:** Amid a wave of anti-democratic sentiment nationwide, including the implementation of restrictive and discriminatory ballot access policies in certain other states, [New Mexico will take action to protect and expand voting rights](#), including by expanding online voter registration, providing further protections for Native voters, and creating a permanent, voluntary absentee ballot request list.
 - ***NMBC adamantly opposes this legislation because it jeopardizes legitimate voting rights.***
 - ***It increases voter access by extending the early voting period through the Sunday before Election Day, designating Election Day as a state holiday, and allowing 16-year-olds to participate in local elections.***
 - ***Creates a permanent absentee voter list that allows individuals to voluntarily receive mail ballots for each election without needing to make individual requests.***
 - ***Expands online voter registration opportunities by allowing individuals without MVD-issued ID to register online using their full social security number.***
 - ***Extends the timeline for mailing ballots to voters to 35 days before an election and extends the deadline for accepting voted ballots to 7 p.m. the Friday after an election to accommodate for mail delivery time.***
 - ***Supports Native voting access by expanding the timeline for indigenous nations, tribes, and pueblos to request alternate voting sites.***
 - ***Increases automatic voter registration by providing a mechanism for eligible individuals to become automatically registered to vote upon completing a transaction at the Motor Vehicle Department.***
 - ***Enables nominating petition signatures to be securely submitted electronically.***
 - ***Automatically restores the voting rights of those convicted of a felony who are not currently incarcerated; and***
 - ***Creates an option to vote a straight party ballot.***



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- **Supporting rural health care delivery:** The governor will seek to create a Rural Hospital Services Fund, supporting hospitals in counties with fewer than 100,000 residents by providing matching funds to cover a percentage of operating losses in the first few years of a hospital's operation or to support expanded services at an existing hospital. This initiative would provide critical support for rural health care delivery in parts of the state too often underserved by available health care options.
 - ***Support is needed for health care in our rural areas, but we would prefer to see more research done to assure it is well planned out and sustainable. The continual knee-jerk reaction to issues is creating many additional problems for our state.***