

**MINUTES
of the
SECOND MEETING
of the
COURTS, CORRECTIONS AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE**

**June 30 - July 1, 2025
Taos Tent
7 Thunderbird Road
Taos Ski Valley**

The second meeting of the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee was called to order by Senator Joseph Cervantes, chair, on June 30, 2025 at 9:04 a.m. at the Taos Tent in Taos Ski Valley.

Present

Sen. Joseph Cervantes, Chair
Rep. Christine Chandler, Vice Chair
Rep. Marianna Anaya
Sen. Crystal Brantley
Rep. Nicole Chavez
Rep. William A. Hall II
Rep. Dayan Hochman-Vigil
Sen. Antonio Maestas
Rep. Andrea Reeb

Advisory Members

Rep. John Block
Rep. Cynthia Borrego
Sen. Natalie Figueroa
Rep. Joy Garratt
Rep. Tara L. Lujan
Rep. Debra M. Sariñana (6/30)
Sen. Mimi Stewart
Sen. Anthony L. Thornton
Sen. Linda M. Trujillo (6/30)
Sen. Peter Wirth (6/30)

Guest Legislator

Sen. Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales (7/1)

Absent

Rep. Janelle Anyanonu
Sen. Cindy Nava
Sen. Nicholas A. Paul
Rep. Andrea Romero
Rep. Angelica Rubio
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez

Rep. Gail Armstrong
Sen. Heather Berghmans
Rep. Eleanor Chávez
Sen. Katy Duhigg
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary
Rep. Yanira Gurrola
Sen. Steve D. Lanier
Rep. Stefani Lord
Rep. Alan T. Martinez
Sen. Micaelita Debbie O'Malley
Rep. Sarah Silva
Rep. Nathan P. Small
Rep. Reena Szczepanski

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Nancy Martinez, Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service (LCS)

Sean Dolan, Staff Attorney, LCS

Simon Suzuki, Staff Attorney, LCS

Domenica Nieto, Research Assistant, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and are posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Monday, June 30**Welcome and Introductions (9:04 a.m.)**

Senator Cervantes welcomed members of the committee and members of the public to the meeting.

Welcome to Taos Ski Valley (9:08 a.m.)

Richard Bellis, village administrator, Village of Taos Ski Valley, welcomed the committee to the Village of Taos Ski Valley and gave an overview of the village and needs for the village.

Now Off the Pot? Enforcing Cannabis Controls After House Bill 10 (2025) (HB 10) (9:28 a.m.)

Clay Bailey, superintendent, Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD), and Todd Stevens, director, Cannabis Control Division, RLD, updated the committee on the implementation of HB 10 and challenges that remain in its implementation, gave a roadmap for how the enforcement provisions in the bill will work and answered questions from committee members. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=1>.

Criminal Justice: The Public Defender's and District Attorney's Perspectives (10:24 a.m.)

Bennett J. Baur, chief public defender, Law Offices of the Public Defender, and Fernando Macias, district attorney, Third Judicial District, discussed the challenges faced by

district attorneys and public defenders, including caseloads, pay scales and funding of the State Crime Lab, discussed ways in which the offices can collaborate to make a more efficient system and answered questions from committee members.

Getting Boots on the Ground: Law Enforcement Recruitment and Retention (12:04 p.m.)

Alison Nichols, deputy director, New Mexico Municipal League, and Tim Johnson, public safety director, New Mexico Self-Insurers' Fund, New Mexico Municipal League, provided an update on law enforcement vacancy rates, pay rates, morale, retention and best practices to ensure robust law enforcement recruitment. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=3>.

Securing Justice: Courthouse Security (2:11 p.m.)

Cynthia Pacheco, director, Court Operations Division, Administrative Office of the Courts, presented a history of court security in the state, gave examples of threats to judges, discussed plans for security expansions for the courts and answered questions from committee members. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=4>.

Who Pays to Jail? Local and State Crossover (2:43 p.m.)

Grace Philips, risk management director, New Mexico County Insurance Authority, New Mexico Association of Counties, and Katherine Carroll, Government Relations, New Mexico Association of Counties, presented a budget overview of the counties in relation to the money spent on housing people in jails, discussed funding shortfalls and made requests for further funding. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=5>.

Are New Mexico's Laws Enough? Or in the Way? (4:03 p.m.)

Mary Carmack-Altwhies, district attorney, First Judicial District, and Sam Bregman, district attorney, Second Judicial District, discussed caseloads of district attorneys, crime statistics, juvenile crime and budget requests and answered questions from committee members. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=6>.

Committee Discussion (5:28 p.m.)

The committee held an open discussion on issues that included juvenile crime, telephone harassment, criminal penalties and funding priorities of the committee.

Approval of Minutes (5:40 p.m.)

The committee approved the minutes of the May 27, 2025 meeting.

Recess

The meeting recessed at 5:46 p.m.

Tuesday, July 1**Reconvene**

Senator Cervantes reconvened the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

The Courts Step Up: Behavioral Health and House Bill 8 (2025) (HB 8) (9:13 a.m.)

The Honorable David K. Thomson, chief justice, New Mexico Supreme Court; Esperanza Lucero, administrator, Behavioral Health Integration and Reform, Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); and Sarah Jacobs, deputy director, AOC, presented an overview of the structure of the court system in the state, then discussed the steps that have so far been taken in regard to the enactment of HB 8 and the setup of behavioral health systems and answered questions from members of the committee. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=7>.

Years Later and a Work in Progress? Law Enforcement Certification Board House Bill 68 (2022) (10:33 a.m.)

Senator Maestas and Julie Ann Ball, member, Law Enforcement Certification Board, summarized the changes recently made to the Law Enforcement Certification Board, challenges in hiring for the board and issues still facing the board and answered questions from committee members. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=CCJ&Date=6/30/2025&ItemNumber=8>.

Committee Discussion (11:35 a.m.)

The committee held an open discussion on issues that included topics for future meetings, specialty courts and government and election modernization issues.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.