

April 4, 2019

HOUSE EXECUTIVE MESSAGE NO. 28

The Honorable Brian Egolf, Jr., Speaker of the House and
Members of the House of Representatives
State Capitol Building
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Honorable Speaker Egolf and Members of the House:

Pursuant to my authority under Article IV, Section 22 of the New Mexico Constitution, I have vetoed HOUSE BILL 564, as amended (“HB 564”), enacted by the Fifty-Fourth Legislature, First Session, 2019.

This bill is predicated on sound policy considerations. Many states have enacted probation and parole reforms that have improved public safety, reduced recidivism rates, and decreased taxpayer costs by prioritizing limited prison space for dangerous criminals. As one example, since enacting criminal justice reforms in 2011, North Carolina has closed ten prisons and reduced their prison population by 3,400 people. HB 564 represents a good step in that direction.

However, it is crucial that all stakeholders participate in the necessary discussion that New Mexicans are having about criminal justice reform, including reforms to the probation and parole system. After HB 564 was passed, the Office of the Attorney General (“OAG”) and the New Mexico District Attorney’s Association (“NMDAA”) sent a letter to my office expressing concerns about HB 564 and its potential consequences. As HB 564’s sponsors have noted, the OAG and NMDAA did not propose any amendments to HB 564 when the bill was being drafted and debated. Although I do not agree with many of their characterizations of HB 564 or when they chose to express their concerns, I have vetoed HB 564 to provide another opportunity for these stakeholders to weigh in on the important issues addressed by the bill.

Being tough on crime is not inconsistent with being smart on crime, and our government needs to be both. That is why I intend to bring all of the stakeholders together prior to the next legislative session to discuss parole and probation reforms and to seek common ground with respect to the concerns expressed by the OAG and NMDAA. I fully expect that the OAG and NMDAA will take this opportunity to develop policies to address these important issues.

Respectfully yours,

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

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Time: _____ a.m. p.m.

Date: _____ 2019

By _____
Secretary of State

Time: _____ a.m. p.m.

Date: _____ 2019

By _____
Chief Clerk of the House