

Governor issues executive clemency to 19

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SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham issued the first pardons of her administration on June 26, invoking her power of executive clemency for 19 individuals convicted of crimes in New Mexico, most of whom were guilty of non-violent offenses.

The forgiven offenses included forgery, drug possession, burglary, larceny, issuing a worthless check and conspiracy, among others. All were at least a decade old, the most recent having occurred in 2007; some dated back several decades.

The majority of the applicants provided clemency by Lujan Grisham had also previously applied for pardons under the previous administrations of Susana Martinez or Bill Richardson.

“The power of executive clemency is an exercise in compassion,” Lujan Grisham said. “Each of us, in our own way, in our own lives, has the obligation to find forgiveness in our hearts for those individuals who have paid their debts, who have expressed genuine contrition and made sincere and forthright amends for their offenses.

“The governor’s power of executive clemency is an avenue for that exercise available to me, and I am humbled by the opportunity to deliver it. My administration will continue to evaluate all applicants in a responsible, methodical and even-handed manner,” she said.

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Article V, Section 6 of the New Mexico Constitution provides that the “governor shall have power to grant reprieves and pardons, after conviction for all offenses except treason and in cases of impeachment.” The governor’s decision to pardon is “unrestrained by any consideration other than the conscience and wisdom and the sense of public duty of the governor.”

The governor does not have authority to pardon convictions for violations of municipal ordinances or convictions from another jurisdiction, such as convictions from other states and convictions under federal law.

The governor’s pardon restores certain fundamental rights, such as the right to vote, the right to hold public office, and other positions of public trust, and the right to bear arms.

The governor refers requests for executive clemency to the state Parole Board, which conducts investigations and provides non-binding recommendations. The Parole Board recommended clemency in each of the 19 cases.

Pardons are filed with the Office of the Secretary of State.