

Governor signs three measures into law

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 10 July 2020 06:26



SANTA FE — Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham affixed her signature to House Bill 5, Senate Bill 4, and Senate Bill 5 as June drew to a close.

House Bill 5 establishes the New Mexico Civil Rights Commission, a bipartisan, nine-member body, which will evaluate and make recommendations on the creation of a civil right of action for violations of state constitutional rights and on unnecessary excessive force by police officers. It will also review the use of qualified immunity as a defense to liability by an employee of a public body. The commission will submit a report to the Courts, Corrections and Justice Committee by Nov. 15.

Six members of the commission will be appointed by the New Mexico Legislative Council; three will be appointed by the governor. No more than five members may be of the same political party. At least one member must have law enforcement experience. geographic, gender, cultural and racial diversity must be considered in the appointment of members.

The legislation was sponsored by House Speaker Brian Egolf, D-Santa Fe, Sen. Jerry Ortiz y Pino, D-Bernalillo, and Rep. Karen Bash, D-Bernalillo. The bill was approved with bipartisan support in both chambers.

“Our communities are marching to demand changes that rethink policing,” said Egolf. “With the creation of a New Mexico Civil Rights Commission, we’ll begin making real steps toward a future when violations of civil rights result in swift and certain consequences.”

Governor signs three measures into law

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 10 July 2020 06:26

Senate Bill 4 is designed to mitigate the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the 2020 general election in New Mexico and provide for the secure and expeditious conduct of absentee voting in the fall.

Under the new law, county clerks may automatically mail applications for absentee ballots to each mailable voter in the count. The bill also accommodates the secretary of health and secretary of state in requiring additional provisions for voting-by-mail, should they be warranted by emergent public health conditions. The legislation additionally protects the voting rights of New Mexico pueblos and tribes by ensuring polling places will not be closed or consolidated without the written agreement of the Nation.

The legislation was sponsored by Sen. Daniel Ivey-Soto, D-Bernalillo, Sen. Gabriel Ramos, D-Catron, Grant, Socorro, Rep. Linda Trujillo, D-Santa Fe, and Rep. D. Wonda Johnson, D-McKinley, San Juan. The bill passed the senate with overwhelming bipartisan support.

“As we prepare for the 2020 general election and given the current public health uncertainties, the purpose of this bill is to ensure that all voters will be able to cast their ballots safely, timely, and securely – whether voting in person or by mail,” Ivey-Soto said.

Senate Bill 5 reverts unencumbered state appropriations to the general fund and authorizes the issuance of several short-term bonds as part of an effort to stabilize state finances in light of the global economic upheaval caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The legislation was sponsored by Sen. George Muñoz, D-McKinley, Cibola, San Juan and Sen. Stuart Ingle, R-Chaves, Curry, DeBaca, Lea, Roosevelt. The bill was approved with overwhelming bipartisan support in both chambers.

“Righting the budget in the midst of unprecedented hardship stemming from this pandemic meant we had to make hard choices,” Muñoz said. “The measures in SB5 will help put existing money where it is most needed today without having to make more painful cuts to critical programs, and help us bridge the deep fiscal gap facing us in the months and years ahead.”

Governor signs three measures into law

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 10 July 2020 06:26

“This budget fix was able to get us out of some hot water for the time being without having to raise taxes,” Ingle said. “But New Mexicans need to understand that the budget solution used one-time money. The state won’t be out of financial danger until the economy picks up substantially and tax dollars come into the state coffers on a regular basis.

“We came together to modify the budget during the special session. We need to continue working together come January when we expect to face continued uncertainty that will need a lasting solution to help the economy,” he added.