

# NEW MEXICO *Petroleum Marketers Association Report*



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# NMPMA



## **New Mexico Governor Signs Budget and Tax Package Before Deadline but Vetoes Disaster Response Bill**

*In a busy end to her final bill-signing period,* Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed off on an \$11.1 billion spending plan and a tax package that includes hefty incentives for New Mexico physicians.

Lujan Grisham, who is set to step down from office at the end of this year, specifically cited investments in universal childcare, public safety and health care as hallmarks of her administration. *“We’ve built a strong foundation of opportunities for New Mexico families, and while this budget marks a massive leap forward our work is far from over,”* she said in a statement.

But the two-term governor used her line-item veto authority to ax some budget provisions, including language that childcare assistance be prioritized for low-income families. Grisham also vetoed two bills, including a measure changing the process for how the state responds to wildfires, floods and other natural disasters.



**Governor Michelle L. Grisham**

## **News Around New Mexico:**

### **Governor Appoints Rex Wilson to a vacant Senate seat.**

Grisham appoints Rex Wilson, a rancher and former Lincoln County commissioner, to fill a state Senate seat in southern New Mexico. Senate Minority Leader William Sharer, R Farmington praised the appointment of Wilson, saying he would be a welcome addition to the Senate Republican caucus.

### **Former Legislators Aim to Return, as State House Races Take Shape**

New Mexico may be the only state that doesn’t pay its legislators a salary – at least for now – but there must be something about the Roundhouse that keeps some members coming back.

At least four ex-lawmakers filed paperwork to run for office, including former state Rep. Debbie Rodella of Espanola, who served 26 years in the state House before being ousted in the 2018 primary. Yolanda Jaramillo of Dixon for the House District 41 lost her seat 7 years ago and is working to win it back.

In other races around the state, Republican former state Rep. David Adkins of Albuquerque filed to run against incumbent Charlotte Little in House District 68.

Meanwhile, two former lawmakers are seeking to return to the Round House - former Rep. Harry Garcia of Grants and Marsella Duarte of Albuquerque.

### **New Mexico’s Primary Ballot is Set, After Some Candidates Qualify via Signature Process**

A three-way Republican showdown in the governor’s race. A Democratic primary challenge for incumbent U.S. Senator Ben Ray Lujan. And several rematches from 2024 in state House seats. New Mexico’s primary election ballot was finalized after several major candidates who fell short of automatically qualifying for the June ballot at their pre-primary conventions used a secondary process to secure a spot on the ballot. The list of candidates includes gubernatorial hopeful Duke Rodriguez of Albuquerque who argued the GOP convention was just “one room” and not an accurate barometer of electoral success. He will square off in the primary election against



# NOTES



two fellow Republicans - Rio Rancho Mayor Gregg Hull and Albuquerque small business owner Doug Turner. On the Democratic side, former U.S. Interior Secretary Deb Haaland and Bernalillo County District Attorney Sam Bregman are vying for their party's nomination and have already sparred over debates, policy plans and plagiarism allegations.

## Four New Mexico Candidates Disqualified After Failing Ballot Requirements

If he rebuffs a primary challenge, US Senator Ben Ray Lujan is set to avoid a Republican opponent in his bid for a second term, after a potential GOP opponent was disqualified for failing to meet ballot requirements. The disqualification of Republican candidate Christopher Vanden Heuvel of Rio Rancho means that for the first time in modern state history, the state's general election ballot for a U.S. Senate race will have only one major party candidate. In addition to Vanden Heuvel, other disqualified candidates include Republican Carlton Pennington of Moriarty in the 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District and Republican gubernatorial hopeful Belinda Robertson of Las Cruces.

## New Mexico Democrats Seek to Move Up Presidential Primary in 2028

New Mexico's Democratic Party has launched a long shot bid to become one of the early primary states for the 2028 presidential election cycle.

In their recent application to the Democratic National Committee, state party leaders touted New Mexico's diverse electorate and relatively inexpensive media market as factors that set the state apart.

## New Mexico Poised for Short-Term Budget Boost as Oil Prices Surge

U.S. Central Command announced it destroyed Iranian navy vessels laying mines near the Strait of Hormuz, through which roughly 20% of the world's oil traverses on its journey from Middle Eastern oil fields to international markets. Soaring cost of crude oil will add millions to the state's coffers through taxes on oil and gas production.

## Blue Pony Energy Selects New Mexico for \$1.6 Billion Facility

The Land of Enchantment has enchanted another company to establish roots in the state. Blue Pony Energy, a Houston-based startup chemical manufacturer that turns natural gas into clean-burning fuels and industrial materials, has elected to build a clean fuels manufacturing facility in Lovington. Blue Pony CEO Justin Rencurel said it was Lovington and New Mexico's "world class" energy resources and infrastructure, sustainability policies and goals, and engaging business and community environment that helped the state beat out other sites in Texas, the Appalachian Basin and Canada.

## Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham Signs Universal Child Care Bill into Law

Concerns about the program's long term price tag may still linger, but backers of New Mexico's first of its kind in the nation universal childcare program were all smiles during signing. Senate Bill 241 removes income limits for receiving state-subsidized childcare. Senate Bill 241 allows up to \$700 million to be taken from an early childhood trust fund over the next 5 years to help with universal childcare. The trust fund created in 2020 has \$11 billion due to oil production in New Mexico.

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