

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 29, 2021
Contact: Joaquin Romero
joaquin.romero@nmlegis.gov
(505) 506-5798

Senate Republicans Criticize Closed-Door Cannabis Negotiations *Call on Governor to delay Special Session*

SANTA FE – New Mexico Senate Republicans today criticized Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and Democratic leaders in the Senate and House for engaging in closed-door negotiations regarding cannabis legislation and the upcoming Special Session. Senate Republican leaders are now calling on the Governor to delay the Special Session until some bipartisan consensus is reached.

“Since the Legislature adjourned on March 20, Senate Republican leaders have not been included in the conversations regarding the Special Session,” said Senate Republican Leader, **Senator Greg Baca** (District 29-Bernalillo and Valencia). “We are now less than 24 hours from returning to the Capitol, and to our knowledge, there is still no consensus and we have not yet seen any of the proposed bills. Whatever is happening is coming together behind closed doors and it lacks the transparency New Mexicans want and deserve.”

“I sponsored cannabis legislation during the Regular Session and offered to work with the Governor and Democratic leaders on a consensus bill that would garner bipartisan support,” added **Senator Cliff Pirtle** (District 32-Chaves, Eddy, and Otero). “Despite assurances that I would be included in the negotiations, I was again left out until the last minute. If we eventually see a cannabis bill, I want the public to know that it was not brokered in good faith with input from all stakeholders. Instead, it will likely be the product of a few Democratic legislators, the Governor, and the affluent industry members who are fortunate to be part of her inner circle.”

“The inability of the Governor and Democratic leaders to pass a cannabis bill over the past two months is good indicator that they need more time and input,” concluded Senate Republican Whip, **Senator Craig Brandt** (District 40-Sandoval). “The public has been locked out of the Capitol, Democratic leadership has not communicated with us, and I fear the output will be a rushed and problematic cannabis bill with dangerous, unintended consequences. The Legislature must convene again in the fall for redistricting. That is ample time for us to come up with a good bill and the Governor should seriously consider delaying the Special Session until then.”

###