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## **Senator Crystal Diamond’s Legislation to Address Rural Community Disparities Signed Into Law**

SANTA FE – This week, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed Senate Bill 193 into law. The bill, sponsored by Senator Crystal Diamond (R-Hidalgo, Luna, Sierra, and Doña Ana) and Senator Siah Correa Hemphill (D-Catron, Grant, and Socorro) creates a “Rural Equity Ombud” charged with addressing issues of concern to rural and frontier communities.

“The urban/rural divide in our state must be addressed and this bill is an important step in that direction,” said Senator Diamond. “The Rural Equity Ombud will help us identify the needs of the underserved and give rural New Mexicans another advocate at the seat of government. The staff person will be housed in the Department of Finance and Administration and will work full-time to ensure the needs of rural communities are met.”

The Silver City-based National Center for Frontier Communities (NCFC) supports the vision of this position and determined that the model is both likely to succeed and highly needed to address the geographic discrepancy in resource allocations across New Mexico.

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