



Office of the Governor

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Nora Meyers Sackett
Press Secretary, Office of the Governor
nora.sackett@state.nm.us
(505) 690-7313

June 23, 2021

Gov. meets with State Police officers to celebrate important pension fix

SANTA FE – Surrounded by Department of Public Safety leadership and New Mexico State Police officers, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Wednesday hosted a “signing ceremony” for Senate Bill 315 at the Law Enforcement Academy in Santa Fe. Physical distancing requirements precluded an in-person event at the time the governor signed the bill in April.

Senate Bill 315 was an important fix to an error in the State Police pension system created by the previous state administration in 2015.

In 2015, more than 100 officers from the Department of Public Safety Motor Transportation and Special Investigations divisions were merged with the state police force; however, they were not included in the State Police retirement plan, effectively classifying them as civilians.

Brought to the governor’s attention by the New Mexico State Police Association at the conclusion of the regular 2020 legislative session, the governor committed to securing a fix, and saw through the passage of Senate Bill 315 in the regular 60-day session earlier this year.

Effective July 1, the signed legislation will rectify the disparity and absorb 90 affected officers into the correct retirement plan for New Mexico State Police, making them whole.

“I am deeply grateful to every single law enforcement representative in our state – but especially to the State Police officers who went so far above and beyond in protecting New Mexicans throughout the pandemic, working with local governments, delivering food and water, helping stand up and protect vaccination sites and so much more,” said **Gov. Lujan Grisham**. “These men and women are clear about their duty. So we need to be clear about our support for them. There are far too many examples in government where people get left behind – a glitch, a paperwork problem, someone isn’t paying attention somewhere else. We can’t allow those bureaucratic issues to ever prevent us from delivering first responders and public servants the benefits they work for and deserve. We made 90 State Police families whole with this bill. This is an important example of not messing around and simply fixing what needs to be fixed.”

“We all wear the same uniforms, we drive the same units, and we wear the same badge,” said **State Police Chief Robert Thornton**. “Now all of our officers will receive the same benefits they are entitled to. I’m grateful to the governor, I’m grateful to the Legislature, and I’m proud to lead a group of men and women who simply step up and do their duty for New Mexico communities every single day.”

“We brought this issue to the governor, and I’m really happy to see it fixed today,” said **Sgt. Jose Carrasco**, president of the state police officers’ union. “This has been something these officers needed. And now their service will be rewarded with the benefits they deserve.”

Senate Bill 315 was sponsored by Sen. George Muñoz and Rep. Antonio “Moe” Maestas.

###





