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## **EDITORIAL: “Legislative Victory a Win for the People”**

By Senator Greg Baca (District 29-Bernalillo and Valencia), Senate Republican Leader

SANTA FE — Below is an editorial from Senate Republican Leader Greg Baca (District 29-Bernalillo, Valencia) following the monumental New Mexico Supreme Court decision handed down yesterday. For distribution questions please respond to this email.

**During oral arguments this week, Chief Justice of the New Mexico Supreme Court, Michael Vigil, asked Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham’s attorney, “Didn’t you just rewrite the Constitution?”**

**Unfortunately, that is exactly what the Governor had hoped to do when she tried to unilaterally spend billions of dollars in public money without public input or legislative approval. It is no secret. For the past 18 months, Governor Lujan Grisham has exercised virtually unchecked power in New Mexico. Thankfully, some of that power was finally reigned in on Wednesday when Justice Vigil and the high court ruled in favor of the Constitution and reaffirmed what the founders believed—that those closest to the people are best suited to represent them.**

**Enter the New Mexico Legislature, comprised of 112 volunteer members from around the state. We are accountable to our citizen neighbors and we are best suited to appropriate their money. Earlier this year, we earmarked hundreds of millions of federal recovery dollars from the American Rescue Plan Act to fix our roads, expand broadband access, and replenish our unemployment insurance program. Though we did not all agree on where that money was going, there was transparency and public input throughout the process, and the budget ultimately cleared the House and Senate with majority support. The Governor responded by vetoing these appropriations and others, claiming that she alone had control over the allocation of federal funds.**

**This week, the Governor’s attorney was not shy in revealing that in her mind, the Governor knew better than the Legislature on how this public money should be spent. My Democratic co-plaintiff, Senator Jacob Candelaria, and I strongly disagreed, and the State Treasurer affirmed our position that the constitutional power to appropriate taxpayer dollars lies squarely with the representative branch of government.**

**At the very beginning of our lawsuit against the Governor, we made it clear that this was not about politics. It was about the Constitution and our firm belief that New Mexicans deserve a**

**voice in how they want their government to operate. As the citizens of New Mexico, you work hard every day and you count on us to spend your hard-earned tax dollars in a manner that benefits the public good and protects your rights. Our victory at the Supreme Court was a win for you, the people, and now that we have won, your voice will be more important than ever. The Legislature has over \$1 billion in remaining federal recovery dollars to put to work for you and your family. Regardless of your political affiliation, I encourage you to contact your State Representative and Senator, and share your thoughts on how we can invest these funds wisely and begin the process of putting our state back on the right track.**

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