



Office of the Governor

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

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Gov. signs Legislature's sweeping bipartisan liquor law reform measure

SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Wednesday signed House Bill 255, a sweeping bipartisan reform bill approved by the Legislature that will, among other things, provide for home delivery of alcohol as a means of creating a new revenue stream for hard-hit food and drink establishments in New Mexico.

Alcohol delivery permits can be issued to retailers, dispensers, craft distillers, winegrowers, small brewers and restaurant licensees, and identification checks are mandatory for deliveries. The Department of Health is directed as part of the legislation to conduct a study on the effects of alcohol delivery in New Mexico in several years.

After significant revisions in both chambers, the bill now also infuses new equity and opportunity into the state's liquor licensing process, making licenses more affordable and accessible overall while providing for a significant tax deduction among other protections for existing license holders in recognition of their investment.

The bill lifts the restrictions on alcohol sales that had been imposed solely on Sundays and prohibits the sale of miniature bottles of liquor for off-site consumption. The legislation also prohibits wine and spirit sales at gas stations in McKinley County, per an amendment from Sen. George Muñoz of Gallup, who spoke on the Senate floor about the perils of alcoholism and exposure in his county.

The bill was sponsored by members of both parties, led by Sen. Daniel Ivey-Soto and Rep. Antonio "Moe" Maestas, and including Rep. Dayan Hochman-Vigil, Rep. Javier Martinez, Rep. Rod Montoya and Rep. Joshua Hernandez.

"As lawmakers from both parties said over the course of debate, this was an example of productive and creating problem-solving, with well-considered and compassionate and careful arguments made on both sides of a complicated and charged issue," said Gov.

Lujan Grisham. “Like any bipartisan compromise, at the end of the day, most if not all will feel both that they got some of what they wanted and had to give some of what they didn’t. Ultimately I side with those who argued that reform, after so many decades, is more than warranted, and that these reforms, in particular, will move us forward as a state – not only by providing an important new revenue stream for the restaurant and hospitality industry but by making this industry more accessible to more New Mexicans while including important safeguards.”

The governor on Wednesday also signed Senate Bill 52, a technical adjustment to the state unemployment benefit statute that accommodates changes to federal requirements that have come about as a result of pandemic-related unemployment programs, and Senate Bill 122, which clarifies the use of certain insignias under the state Pharmacy Act.

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