

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 8, 2021

Contact: Joaquin Romero

joaquin.romero@nmlegis.gov

(505) 506-5798

Senator Gregg Schmedes Asks Attorney General to Investigate Nursing Home Evictions during COVID

SANTA FE – Today, Senator Gregg Schmedes (District 19-Bernalillo, Sandoval, Santa Fe, and Torrance) sent a letter to Attorney General Hector Balderas asking him to investigate patient evictions at rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, and long-term care facilities during the coronavirus pandemic. Senator Schmedes previously requested an investigation in May 2020, when 54 elderly and frail patients were evicted from the Canyon Transitional Rehabilitation Center. To date, the Attorney General has not responded to Senator Schmedes' request.

“The recent bombshell report from the Attorney General of New York validated many of the concerns I raised in my previous letter to Attorney General Balderas,” said Senator Schmedes. “We know that vulnerable New Mexicans were evicted from facilities to make room for coronavirus patients, and that these facilities were offered significant financial incentives from the state to do so. There is no question that the rights of these vulnerable New Mexicans were violated and that the Governor and Health Secretary were complicit in that violation. I again urge the Attorney General to take action and ensure that this never happens again.”

According to local media outlet, KRQE, the Canyon Transitional Rehabilitation Center received \$600 per day for every coronavirus patient admitted versus the \$280 per day they received to care for an existing patient. State officials previously defended their actions, claiming they needed a place to put coronavirus patients.

###