

For Immediate Release:

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## **SB8 - Air and Hazardous Waste Stringency Passes House, On to the Governor.**

Community leaders across New Mexico applaud today's House passage of Senate Bill 8. Now more than ever, New Mexicans understand the importance of protecting our health, air, and climate. Antiquated state laws prevent the Environmental Improvement Board and local air quality boards from adopting regulations under Air Quality Control Act and the Hazardous Waste Act that are stronger than the federal regulations.

Senate Bill 8 now heads to Governor Lujan Grisham to be signed and will allow key agencies to adopt regulations that protect our health and climate to be more stringent than the federal government. For too long, New Mexico's health and environment have been subject to the political winds in Washington, D.C. Over the last four years, the federal government rolled back nearly 100 of the nation's environmental and public health laws, including mercury regulations for coal-fired power plants and oil and gas methane regulations. New Mexico has a chance to adopt strong public health and environmental protections now for our communities and future generations.

Below please find statements from community leaders across New Mexico applauding passage of Senate Bill 8. I'm happy to help connect you if needed.

### **SB8 House Floor Vote Quote Sheet**

#### **Amy Miller, Manger, New Mexico Environmental Public Health Network**

"Our state's experience with COVID19 has shown us that underserved communities in our state are some of the most vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution and water contamination. New Mexico deserves to be in charge of protecting its citizens' health and natural environment and Senate Bill 8 will help protect New Mexicans' health by doing just that."

#### **JoAnna Strother, Senior Director, American Lung Association**

"Air pollution can cause asthma attacks among many other lung issues. Senate Bill 8 is critical to allowing the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) to address health-harming pollution and hazardous waste and protect New Mexicans from these threats."

#### **Andrew Baker, Communications and Policy Analysis, Health Action New Mexico**

"Senate Bill 8 allows New Mexicans to play a more active role in protecting our environment and advocating for our health. Local communities have to live with the outcomes of environmental regulation, and it's important that they have a say in how those regulations are written."

#### **James Povijua, Policy Director, Center for Civic Policy**

"Communities of color are disproportionately impacted by pollution and the effects of climate change. SB8 will further the environmental and health protections that our communities deserve. Passage of this legislation ensures that the state of New Mexico fulfills its duty to set strong standards to protect all New Mexicans."

#### **Sr. Joan Brown, osf, Director NM Interfaith Power and Light**

“One of the greatest responsibilities we have is to care for one another. Sometimes we do not realize we have the power to do this. Some legislation, like SB8 reminds us that we do have the power to make changes for health, a clean environment, and dignity within our communities. People of faith are grateful for the legislative leadership acting with foresight, and courage to make positive ethical change.”

**Jon Goldstein, Director of Regulatory and Legislative Affairs, Environmental Defense Fund**

“Senate Bill 8 is vital legislation that empowers New Mexicans to make decisions about the health, clean air and water of the people of New Mexico. Thank you to Majority Leader Wirth, Senator Lopez, and Representatives Chandler and Small for championing this legislation and to the House and Senate for approval of this important bill.”

**Nathalie Eddy, NM field advocate, Earthworks**

"For too long, the hands of state and local officials have been tied when it comes to protecting communities and New Mexico's land, air, and water from pollution, chemical contamination and other problems. By removing just four words from two laws, SB-8 will reinforce state authority to reduce the harms that frontline residents face every day."

**Camilla Feibelman, Sierra Club - Rio Grande Chapter Director**

“Communities have the right to clean air and water. When our agencies are limited to absent or gutted protections federally, they can’t protect those rights. The Environment Department can only act on smog pollution when a county is on the brink of noncompliance on the federal level— too late to prevent harm to people’s health. PFAS cleanup has been hampered by the total lack of standards in Washington. SB8 fixes that and protects our communities.”

**Lucas Herndon, Energy & Policy Director, ProgressNow New Mexico**

“It’s telling that the same international oil companies that funded Trump and his anti-climate agenda are spending so much energy and money to fight SB8 in New Mexico through their proxies like NMOGA & Power the Future. New Mexicans should direct their own policies to protect their community resources, not have them dictated by out-of-state corporations for their own financial gain.”

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