



**Contact:** Jennifer Esquivel  
[jennifera.esquivel@state.nm.us](mailto:jennifera.esquivel@state.nm.us)  
(505) 469-2915

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes  
Deputy Secretary Jon Clark

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
November 18, 2021

## **New Mexico Economic Development Secretary Calls for Investment to Ensure Prosperous Future** *Secretary Keyes says "state must take action now."*

**SANTA FE, N.M.** – The New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes told lawmakers today that the vision for New Mexico’s economic future is to have a diverse and robust economy that engages local talent, cultivates innovation, and delivers prosperity for all New Mexicans through empowerment and collaboration.

In presenting EDD’s budget to the Legislative Finance Committee, Keyes reported that FY21 was a record-breaking year with the highest amount of job creation since FY08 -creating over 10,000 jobs - as a result of the Job Training Incentive Program (JTIP) and Local Economic Development Act (LEDA).

“New Mexico must maintain its momentum in building the state’s economy so that it can adapt to meet current needs, while also being forward thinking and attractive to companies and prepared for the demands of the future,” Keyes said. “With this budget cycle, we are building wealth and creating opportunities with the goal of long-term economic security for New Mexicans.”

The agency is asking for increased funding to support projects across EDD’s divisions. Part of this request includes \$2.25 million to support a new Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Office in support of minority-owned businesses, with three new full-time employees.

“A priority for Governor Lujan Grisham, the implementation of the JEDI Office will help establish a foundation for businesses to get the representation and services they need to realize increased revenues and greater economic growth for New Mexico,” Keyes said. “New Mexico is on the leading edge, and an office that works to bring issues of justice and equity to the forefront of business practices and understands the importance of diversity and inclusion is something that will position us as leaders, showing that we are committed to making actionable changes to correct years of systemic oppression.”

In addition, EDD is asking for \$4.5 million in funding to strategically market the state and its nine target industries, including marketing initiatives for the Outdoor Recreation Division (ORD).

To address infrastructure gaps, special appropriation requests include one-time funding of \$30 million for traditional LEDA projects, which helps businesses expand by offsetting costs for land, buildings, and infrastructure, and an additional \$50 million for business and industrial park infrastructure projects to create shovel-ready sites to make us more competitive with other states.

Keyes added, "With a heightened interest of companies looking to migrate out of major urban centers and a push to meet climate goals within the next 15-20 years, it is important to ready New Mexico to be landing zone for those companies."

To support the growth of New Mexico businesses, \$800,000 is being requested for statewide business incubator grants. Federal research shows that businesses that start in incubators are twice as likely to succeed, and the department will work with the state's incubator system to extend the reach of incubators into more rural communities. and \$500,000 has also been requested to add 6 full-time employees to serve as additional regional representatives who will provide technical assistance to communities and local businesses across the state.

EDD is also requesting \$12 million for the JTIP, which reimburses companies a portion of the cost to train new workers or upskill existing employees.

Established in 2019, ORD is seeking \$10 million in funding for the Trails+ Grant and the Outdoor Equity Fund to enhance access equity and provide needed infrastructure that will energize our outdoor economy.

To support the rapidly growing film and television industry, EDD is asking for \$450,000 for training for minority filmmakers and \$50 million to establish and operate a film academy through the New Mexico Film Office (NMFO).

"Modeled after the Georgia Film Academy and other notable workforce training programs, the New Mexico Film Academy will provide the state with a pipeline of New Mexicans who will have the education and training necessary to be qualified for the high demand careers in New Mexico's film and television industry."

Keyes explained that the department is operating with 30 percent fewer resources than a decade ago and that investment is necessary if the state is to position itself for recovery and resiliency.

"Policymakers in New Mexico need to recognize that major changes to the economy will require significant funding to the Economic Development Department and its programs," Keyes said. "The money invested today will help New Mexico realize the potential we know the state has. This funding is necessary so we may provide opportunities and a future for all New Mexicans. New Mexico cannot continue on the path it has pursued in prior years; the state must take action now."

###

*The New Mexico Economic Development Department's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive.*

New Mexico Economic Development Department  
[EDD.NewMexico.gov](http://EDD.NewMexico.gov)