



NEW MEXICO  
**LAW OFFICES OF THE  
PUBLIC DEFENDER**

Chief Public Defender  
Bennett J. Baur

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For immediate release

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## NM attorney to lead national public defense org board

*Longtime public defender Cydni Sanchez elected president of NAPD board*

ALBUQUERQUE — A top leader of the New Mexico Law Offices of the Public Defender has been elected president of the Board of Directors for the National Association of Public Defense, which serves as a national professional organization for more than 30,000 public defenders and a key voice in advocacy for public defense policy and reform.

Cydni Sanchez has dedicated her legal career to public defense in New Mexico and now brings her experience as a line attorney and most recently as Deputy Chief of Administration for the LOPD to her one-year term as NAPD Board president. Sanchez will be the first woman and first Latina to hold the position.

"Cydni comes into this role at a very important time for public defense as the country continues to face overwhelming caseloads amid retention and recruitment issues, all contributing to the crushing impact of this work," said NAPD Executive Director Lori James-Townes. "Having worked with Cydni, her leadership is amazing, and if anyone can help us through these tough times, it is her."

At LOPD, Sanchez oversees the department's budgeting process in addition its administrative functions, including Fiscal, HR, IT, General Counsel, Training and Recruitment, and more. She has served on numerous leadership boards and projects to help her community and the mission of public defense. LOPD is the state's largest law firm, employing more than 400 people and operating a \$64 million budget. It is constitutionally tasked with representing indigent people facing criminal charges in the state and handles an average 77,000 cases annually.

"Throughout her career, Cydni has demonstrated passion and commitment to the cause of defending the poorest members of our community. She has helped to transform the LOPD into an agency that is responsive to the needs of our clients and the people of New Mexico. NAPD recognized her leadership skills, and we are honored to have one of our own lead this important national organization," said LOPD Chief Public Defender Bennett J. Baur.

Sanchez is a 13th generation New Mexican raised in Albuquerque, where she resides with her husband and their two sons. She graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2005.



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