

# A ROUTE TO A SAFER NEW MEXICO

<b>PREVENTION</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>ACCOUNTABILITY</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITY</b>	<b>33</b>

*EXIT NEXT RIGHT*  *SMART ON CRIME*

**DEB HAALAND FOR NEW MEXICO**

GOVERNOR 2026  
**DEB HAALAND**  
NEW  MEXICO

Every person living in New Mexico deserves to feel safe in their home, their school, and their community. I know that right now, many New Mexicans don't. They are worried about crime and what it means for their kids, their businesses, and their livelihoods. They are worried about Trump's ICE coming in to separate families and take away resources that law enforcement needs to keep criminals off our streets.

As Governor, I will focus every day on stopping violent crime while addressing its root causes. I will fight to get illegal guns and drugs off our streets, get property crimes under control, and protect our communities from Trump's dangerous policies.

We have to invest in people and places and ensure that every New Mexico community has the resources and safety to thrive because everything is interconnected. Crime, in some cases, is generational. We see that play out with young children committing violent crimes who just need a path to a better way of life.

I will work to hire and train more law enforcement officers, make smart moves toward community policing models, and create an Office of Community Safety that will be staffed with social workers, counselors, and behavioral health professionals, because true safety cannot be built on enforcement alone. Lasting safety comes from investing in people and communities so they're strong from the beginning. That means reducing the trauma far too many youth experience in our state, supporting young people with after-school programs and mentorship, and expanding access to behavioral and mental health care so people get help before they're in crisis.

It also means addressing substance use with treatment and recovery rather than incarceration, and creating accountability systems that emphasize fairness, trust, and opportunity. That means that criminals will be held accountable and those who can be helped get the help they need. When we strengthen these foundations, we reduce crime, while creating healthier, more resilient communities.

My plan will focus on law enforcement, supporting kids, keeping violent criminals behind bars, behavioral health, overhauling the Children, Youth & Families Department (CYFD), and standing up to Trump's lawlessness. New Mexicans stick together and support one another – it will take all of us to rally together to build safer communities across our state.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rob Hatch". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. It is located in the bottom right corner of the page, above a small vertical line.

# MODERNIZE LAW ENFORCEMENT, MAKING OUR STREETS SAFER

We need well-trained and resourced law enforcement to keep us safe. When I met with law enforcement leaders, they shared that they don't have the resources to address the volume and nature of the challenges we face, especially the harmful effects of drugs. We must be smart on crime – working with local communities on their specific needs, putting more officers on the beat, and investing more in community policing to keep our streets safe. At the same time, law enforcement must work to be partners with the communities they serve, and they must be held accountable for respecting people's rights. The Trump administration is causing chaos in our communities and hampering our local law enforcement's ability to keep New Mexicans safe. I will not let Donald Trump continue to put New Mexicans at risk.

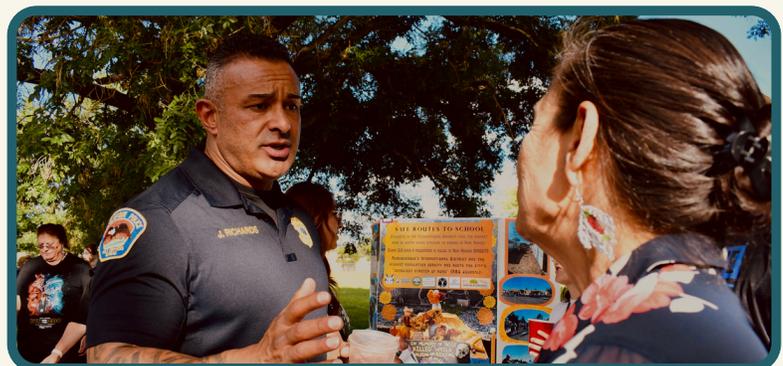
When I was Secretary of the Interior, I oversaw multiple law enforcement agencies comprising nearly 3,000 sworn officers and established the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples unit. When I served in Congress, I was grateful for the bravery of police officers who protected the U.S. Capitol during the January 6, 2021 insurrection. And I was proud to support the American Rescue Plan, which provided tens of billions of dollars to police, law enforcement, and related programs to help police departments across New Mexico, including keeping officers on the job during the pandemic. I support our officers on the beat and want to make sure they have the tools they need to serve our communities.

---

## As Governor, I will:

- ***Stand up an Office of Community Safety.*** Create the first-in-the nation state level community safety office after the nationally recognized program in Albuquerque. Deploy and coordinate social workers, counselors, and medical and behavioral health professionals to respond to behavioral health calls, so traditional police can focus on police work. This shift empowers officers to focus on violent crime calls while trained professionals assist individuals in mental health crises.
- ***Recruit and retain public safety professionals.*** Widen pathways to bring more public safety officers into local departments. Launch outreach programs that build better relationships in rural communities to recruit young people into public safety careers. Increase pay parity for rural departments to attract quality officers to areas experiencing severe staffing shortages. Subsidize housing costs for law enforcement by assisting with mortgage payments, down payments, or other related costs, to help recruit and retain officers.

- **Get illegal drugs off our streets.** Drug traffickers and suppliers need to know that if they try to operate in New Mexico, they will get caught and they will be punished. Aggressively go after distributors to reduce the supply that is damaging our communities. Pass disclosure laws to go after organized crime groups using shell companies to hide their money.
- **Keep violent criminals behind bars.** Ensure law enforcement and courts focus on violent offenders, and make that focus the center of resource allocation. Examine how recent reforms to pretrial detention have been implemented and formulate further steps to administer it effectively to keep dangerous offenders off the streets, arrange intensive supervision, and appropriately prioritize prison beds after conviction. Speed up court timelines for credible violent crimes so victims do not wait years for resolution.
- **Promote gun safety.** Pass the [Stop Illegal Gun Trade Act](#), which will put new requirements on firearms dealers, restrict extremely dangerous weapons, and provide oversight on restricted weapons. Begin with appointing a dedicated Gun Violence Prevention Coordinator, who will oversee a task force dedicated to stemming the plague of gun violence. Establish an Office of Gun Violence Prevention to work with the Department of Public Safety to address gun violence across the state and develop prevention frameworks. Recruit mentors to address gun violence, develop strategies to remove illegal guns from schools, and mobilize community support.
- **Support Tribal Police.** Address compensation disparities, including pay, retirement, and other benefits that make it especially challenging for Tribal Police to recruit and retain officers. Provide surge funding for unanticipated major investigations or other operations requiring significant increases in resources. Protect state-funded access to New Mexico's statewide interoperable emergency radio network for Tribal Police, fire, EMS, and dispatch centers. Enter into data sharing agreements to increase cooperation between law enforcement in different jurisdictions while respecting Tribal sovereignty.



- ***Harness the knowledge of experienced officers.*** Empower retired officers to mentor the next generation at the state academy, sharing their experience and institutional knowledge. Support local police forces as they recruit experienced leaders to head their departments. Allow retired police officers to collect their earned retirement benefits while returning to work, help strengthen local departments with experienced leadership and ensure long-term stability.
- ***Promote smart and fair accountability.*** Address misconduct and build public trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Foster confidence and strengthen the relationship between New Mexicans and local law enforcement. Prohibit police officers who commit serious misconduct from working in law enforcement again. Simultaneously, work with law enforcement organizations to fight disinformation about qualified immunity that has been used to scare people away from law enforcement careers in New Mexico. Continue to strengthen New Mexico's already-strong requirements that law enforcement officers use body cameras and operate with complete transparency.
- ***Equip law enforcement.*** From state to Tribal to rural agencies, departments need modernized drug enforcement tactics and tools to target drug traffickers and remove illegal drugs from our streets. Coordinate resources and provide Tribal and local departments with updated equipment to safeguard our communities.
- ***Launch hotspot policing.*** Implement a statewide micro-time hot spot strategy, which targets areas with high violent and property crime rates for a certain period of time. This allows law enforcement to prioritize high risk areas and effectively target crime hot spots with high efficiency. Coordinate with local departments to provide data analysis on local crime hotspots that can deploy their limited resources to best use.
- ***Stop theft.*** Increase funding to the organized Retail Crime Unit in the Attorney General's Office. Provide stable funding to investigate and prosecute retail theft across New Mexico and better partner with state and local law enforcement. Coordinate data sharing agreements to target repeat organized retail crime offenders and enable them to be prosecuted. Provide resources and incentives for police departments' targeting of auto thefts and burglaries. Assist homeowners and businesses to increase lighting and retrofit their property against theft.



- **Prosecute crime, stand up for justice.** To have an efficient, fair justice system, capable prosecutors throughout the state are critical. District Attorneys (DAs) are incredibly important for our public safety, and we can't afford to have them working part-time or making decisions with their eyes on anything other than achieving justice.
  - Fund the New Mexico Department of Justice to ensure effective prosecution of criminals statewide.
  - Equip the department to win legal battles against the Trump administration's attacks on New Mexicans' rights.
  - Bring together all New Mexico state, Tribal, local, and federal law enforcement to coordinate and aggressively target fentanyl suppliers.
  - Spearhead initiatives with all DAs so patterns of illegal activity can be recognized more quickly, and resources and information can be deployed through collaborative input.
- **Fully fund public defenders.** Meet the full financial needs of the Law Offices of the Public Defender, which experience high vacancy rates and under-resourcing. Support recruitment, offer housing assistance for public defenders in local court districts, and expand loan forgiveness programs after a three-year service commitment. Allocate funds for crucial support staff within these offices, including interpreters, investigators, and social workers.
- **Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP).** Build on the existing New Mexico Department of Justice's MMIP program – drawing upon the successes of the Missing and Murdered Unit that I launched at the Department of the Interior to solve missing persons cases. Launch a task force to coordinate jurisdictions with state, Tribal, and federal authorities to streamline missing persons cases. Provide stable funding for investigations and routine updates for the program's work in cold cases through outreach to victims' families. Increase community support and resources for victims' families dealing with unsolved cases.

- **Address sexual assault, domestic violence, and crimes against children.**
  - Support the Epstein Truth Commission and Criminal Investigation. Ensure the New Mexico Department of Justice prosecutors have state support and coordination as they investigate the crimes at Zorro Ranch and support the bipartisan truth commission to bring justice to the survivors of Epstein’s torture and abuse.
  - Require that firearms be removed according to Extreme Risk Protection Orders. Ensure that law enforcement agencies share information on prior records across the state.
  - Expand high-quality forensic medical care for sexual-assault victims, which will provide better evidence to arrest and prosecute offenders.
  - Prioritize hiring and securing resources to eliminate and prevent backlogs in processing sexual assault evidence kits (a.k.a. rape kits).
  - Add capacity to the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force to protect kids from online predators and invest in faster digital resources to track them down.
- **Target human trafficking.** Break up human trafficking operations and aggressively prosecute ringleaders, building on the progress of the Human Trafficking Task Force. Close business loopholes and create stronger civil protections against businesses that facilitate human trafficking activities. Build on the existing statewide hotline system for survivors and use the [No Wrong Door](#) model, which establishes regional survivor navigators who coordinate safety planning, trauma-informed care, and housing support, and centralize services across the state. Enable survivors to get immediate help and support resources, anywhere in the state.



# KEEP KIDS ON THE RIGHT PATH

When children commit violent acts, there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. Any policy response that takes a narrow, rather than a holistic, approach is doomed to fail. Juvenile crime reflects a cascade of cracks that the child has fallen through – from families that don't have the support they need to provide supervision and opportunities, to schools that play a crucial role in helping young people make smart choices, to our economy that ought to give every young New Mexican a sense of hope, to a health system that provides care to vulnerable and impressionable kids, to a justice system that should recognize that young people whose brains and identities are still developing need to be treated differently than adults. In too many cases, grandparents and relatives are struggling to care for children whose parents have been impacted by drugs and violence. Sadly, some of the rhetoric we've heard recently about juvenile delinquency ignores these realities. It's not simple, but we must do everything we can to prevent our kids from getting drawn into lives of crime, and help those we have already been put in that position to find new paths forward.

---

---

## As Governor, I will:

- **Steer young New Mexicans away from violent crime.** With a Youth Opportunity and Safety Initiative, we can reduce instances of violence and give young people more options. Stabilize youth by providing [school attendance support](#), substance-use services, job pathways, and behavioral health access while enforcing clear repercussions for serious offenses. Invest in early intervention to prevent the initial struggles that lead to long-term systemic issues.
- **Respond to juvenile crime.** Consolidate existing programs to ensure all departments coordinate their efforts and deliver the most effective support for at-risk youth. Establish a uniform statewide standard for diversion to guarantee consistent justice regardless of where a child grew up or what their background is. Use crisis response models that recognize the difference between youth and adults.
- **Keep youth off the streets.** Invest in after-school mentorship and paid internship programs. Launch programs that provide environments for learning technical and social skills. Fund school districts to hire the support staff necessary to manage additional programs. Provide transportation solutions to overcome barriers in Tribal, rural and underserved communities.

- **Create community support systems.** Build community relationships by expanding outreach to local businesses and non-profits and youth engagement options on weekends and during school breaks. Invest in early intervention infrastructure for marginalized, disconnected, and at-risk youth.
- **Protect Native youth.** Partner with Tribes to address the disproportionate justice system involvement and crisis-level rates of Native youth suicide. Expand support for [Tribal Juvenile Healing to Wellness Courts](#) as culturally grounded alternatives to detention. Expand tribally designed and run youth mentorship and after-school programs. Close the jurisdictional gaps that cause Native kids to fall through the cracks.
- **Mitigate social media's harms on kids.** There is mounting evidence that social media has especially detrimental effects on the development of kids under 15 years old. Coordinate with experts to develop a framework that can guide young people and integrate tools that help young people cope in an ever-changing world. Create support systems for parents to reach out to if they have concerns for their children's mental health. Expand access to library programs, outdoor activities, and social engagements to replace time kids spent on social media with constructive activities. Make sure students are focused on learning and not distracted by smartphones in the classroom.
- **Prevent the next gun tragedy.** Monitor reports of juveniles' social media posts that show illegal guns and conduct outreach to their households to prevent them from committing gun crimes. Address generational gun culture by reaching out to young people who have family members convicted of gun-related crimes.



- **Expand access to mental health programs.** Continue to build the [community school model](#) across New Mexico for local residents to have access to wrap-around services. Increase counseling services for students and community members to address behavioral health issues. Subsidize therapy for children under 15 years old who are experiencing addiction withdrawals from social media. Embedding social workers in public schools to address behavioral incidents, particularly related to violence. Expand support for school based health centers to ensure students have easy access to quality health services, including behavioral health support.
- **Support parents and caregivers.** Bolster community driven parenting support programs in New Mexico by working with local governments and organizations. Create a public health initiative to reach low information communities for parenting classes, support, and education on social media protections. Provide childcare services during classes for parents attending and support enrollment into New Mexico’s universal childcare program. Expand support for grandparents and kin raising children with increased public-private partnerships to extend resources across New Mexico.



# STRENGTHEN COURTS, AN AVENUE FOR JUSTICE

New Mexico's courts are where accountability and justice are either delivered or denied - for people who commit crimes, for victims, and for families caught in cycles of addiction and crisis who need intervention, not just punishment. While meeting with district attorneys, law enforcement, and other leaders across our state, I heard too many times that repeat offenders have become an ongoing threat to their work to keep communities safe. Our goal should be to reduce recidivism by keeping truly violent criminals off the streets, while helping others change the direction of their lives.

Our courts have made real progress resolving cases efficiently in recent years. But there is more to do. I will invest in the court system's capacity to move cases swiftly, expand treatment and diversion programs to reach the people who need them, and ensure that our courts deliver both accountability and opportunity for people to turn their lives around.

---

---

## As Governor, I will:

- **Prioritize violent crime.** Relieve the burden on New Mexico's mainline criminal justice system by expanding court capacity to process heavy caseloads. This expansion empowers courts to prioritize violent crimes and repeat offenders, keeping them off New Mexico's streets. Create a New Mexico court task force to examine other states' specialized court systems for possible adoption by New Mexico.
- **Clear the bottleneck in our courts.** Capacity issues force district courts to endure long wait times for hearings. Increase funding for district courts to accelerate trials and prevent the release of violent offenders back onto the streets while awaiting trial. Modernize data exchanges between district attorneys, courts, and law enforcement to coordinate cases and streamline operations.

- **Centralize competency & forensic services.** Establish a single executive team to manage contractors, waitlists, transportation, and beds for more effective examinations of those who are arrested and are competent to stand trial. Expand state bed capacity for New Mexicans in need of support and offer staffing incentives to ensure facilities remain fully operational.
- **Improve case management.** Increase funding for district attorney screening units to standardize pre-filing reviews and streamline intake. Create grants for a statewide digital evidence system to enhance communication between law enforcement and the courts, thereby reducing case postponements and delays. Adopt time standards that align budgets to eliminate information bottlenecks.



# EXPAND TREATMENT, END HOMELESSNESS

Our state is still suffering the consequences of former Republican Governor Susana Martinez dismantling New Mexico's behavioral health system. Today, drugs and addiction are a main source of crime across the country, with [65% of those incarcerated in New Mexico struggling with substance use](#). In Congress and as Secretary of Interior, I worked to address the mental health and substance abuse crisis impacting our state – securing funding to address the opioid crisis and supporting mental health services for young people in schools. As Governor, I will continue the work to dig ourselves out of the deep hole that the Martinez administration put us in and the Trump Administration continues to make worse. The Behavioral Health Trust Fund that became law last year is an important step, but we must do more.

---

## As Governor, I will:

- **Tackle the fentanyl crisis.** Aggressively expand addiction services and family support programs, while simultaneously giving law enforcement the tools they need to get illegal drugs off our streets. Use fast, effective treatment and recovery models rather than relying solely on incarceration.
- **Invest in prevention, not just treatment.** Expand the Home Visiting Program and fund school-based prevention efforts that reach young people before substance use or mental health challenges take hold. Ensure all appropriated funds are actually invested in the infrastructure and groups already working to address behavioral health.
- **Address homelessness with Housing First.** This evidence-based approach prioritizes providing permanent, stable housing without barriers to entry. Long-term stable living environments get people off the streets, ensure their safety, and help them access mental health and substance use disorder treatment they need.



- **Open more outpatient clinics and deploy mobile clinics.** Use the regional framework established by the Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act to open more outpatient facilities and deploy mobile clinics tailored to each region's specific needs. This ensures that local communities drive the solutions to help people before they are in crisis, and that rural areas aren't left behind.
- **Expand crisis response.** Build on the statewide 988 crisis line, which has already connected over 130,000 New Mexicans to life-saving support, expand mobile crisis intervention teams in every part of the state, including Tribal communities, and accelerate the rollout of certified community behavioral health clinics.
- **Invest in community-based violence intervention.** Provide stronger funding for violence intervention programs, including hiring professionals in high-risk communities to address root causes and better prevent violence from occurring in the first place.
- **Ensure there are options for behavioral health care outside the criminal legal system.** Seek to provide ample opportunity for diversion, and not have court-ordered care be the first resort.
- **Require insurance companies to cover mental health.** Build on New Mexico's first-in-the-nation program that eliminates cost sharing for behavioral health services by requiring insurers to cover treatment, closing remaining coverage gaps, and extending protections wherever possible. Ensure the newly established Behavioral Health Executive Committee has the robust support it needs to coordinate services effectively across the state and stop agencies from working in silos.
- **Grow the behavioral health workforce.** Increase behavioral health training programs and address the faculty shortages that limit how many students they can accept. Streamline credentialing, expand loan repayment incentives for providers who serve high-need and rural areas, and sustain the provider rate increases that the Legislature has funded in recent years.

- **Empower Tribal communities.** Tribes will not be on their own, especially in light of funding cuts and reduced federal support under the Trump Administration. State resources should be available to Tribes, including from the Behavioral Health Trust Fund, to guarantee Tribes a real seat and input in every Behavioral Health Region through government-to-government engagement, fully implement Medicaid reimbursement for traditional healing practices at Urban Indian Organization sites, and invest in an Indigenous behavioral health workforce – including Native-language providers.
- **Strengthen treatment courts and reentry programs.** Increase support and capacity for specialized treatment courts to divert individuals into recovery. Create better support programs for non-violent offenders to help them successfully re-enter the workforce once they are released.
- **Maximize opioid settlement funds.** Ensure that the funds New Mexico and local governments are slated to receive from opioid settlements are coordinated efficiently across agencies and directed specifically toward addressing the root causes of substance use disorders and expanding treatment.
- **Distribute naloxone in care deserts.** Provide free naloxone distribution and training through community health workers, Tribal clinics, and mobile units, with special focus on rural areas where EMS response times are long.
- **Build rapid overdose follow-up teams.** Provide peer support, clinician care, and case managers to connect with people shortly after an overdose, including in rural and Tribal communities, to offer treatment, housing navigation, and recovery support.



# OVERHAUL CYFD

We all have a responsibility to build a bright future for our kids and the generations that come after them. My [education plan](#) and [affordability agenda](#) will work to help families support their children, but when a crisis arises, we must keep our kids safe and healthy. CYFD hasn't met this responsibility, and kids are falling through the cracks. My heart breaks every time I hear that a child is harmed by the action or inaction of the state. Not only does it put children at risk, but also contributes to dynamics that make us all less safe. As governor, I will overhaul CYFD, so that the people who work there have the support they need to do the best job they can, the right professionals are in the department to prevent harm, and we work toward a commission that provides consistent, quality care for kids no matter who is governor.

---

---

## As Governor, I will:

- **Reform the culture within CYFD.** Appoint an experienced cabinet secretary committed to the long-term success of New Mexico's child welfare system, improving child wellbeing and the credentials to serve children in crisis.
- **Reduce burnout and turnover.** Establish support systems for CYFD workers - including mental health counseling, higher wages, and professional development. Implement transparency reporting systems between the Governor's Office and frontline workers to ensure a clear understanding of the work environment. Increasing pay immediately while also compensating experience and education. Provide clear pathways for career and salary advancement. Launch recruitment outreach to fill critical shortages in caseworkers, foster parent recruiters, and social workers. Lower caseloads to meet federal recommendations by offering retention incentives and expanding supervisory capacity.
- **Improve juvenile courts.** Relieve the burden on New Mexico's juvenile system by expanding court capacity to process heavy caseloads and reduce wait times. Identify the solutions needed to improve the children's court capacity and implement them.

- **Expand and support foster services.** Hire additional recruitment officials to identify and assist prospective foster families across the state. Standardize the foster certification process to onboard qualified families efficiently and provide necessary welfare resources. Support CYFD in restoring access to community-based services for children in need. Provide peer support, legal protection, and technical assistance for foster parents caring for at-risk youth.
- **Rebuild child welfare partnerships with Tribal communities.** Prioritize compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), placement preferences, and access to culturally sensitive interventions. Collaborate with Tribal governments to develop assessment tools guided by Tribal welfare experts. Maximize federal funding for culturally responsive treatments and support systems. Partner with Tribal communities to recruit and assist Tribal families in navigating foster licensing.
- **Empower the Office of Child Advocate.** Provide the Attorney General with all necessary resources to investigate abuse and resolve complaints against the department. Increase funding for the Attorney General's Office to provide rigorous oversight, accountability and transparency at CYFD. Mandate data sharing between the Office of the Child Advocate and all child welfare agencies, including State Police, the Healthcare Authority, and the Early Childhood Education and Care Department.



# STAND UP TO ICE

When I first ran for Congress, I said, “*ICE is an out of control institution that is terrorizing American families.*” Now that Trump is back in office, it’s worse. Over the past year, ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) has terrorized communities, murdered innocent people in the streets, and even questioned Native Americans about their citizenship. On top of that, under-trained ICE agents are making the work of local and state law enforcement more difficult. So, I went to the ICE detention center in Cibola County. I heard stories of inmates being taken away from their families and communities, sometimes arrested violently. That is not the America we know and love.

When I was in Congress, I worked to hold the Trump Administration accountable with tough oversight, and I ensured communities had the resources to weather the storm he created.

I did it then, and I will do it again. I will protect New Mexicans against the violation of our rights by the Trump administration. I will not allow Trump to direct ICE, Customs and Border Protection, or any other agency to terrorize our communities.

---

---

## As Governor, I will:

- *Ban ICE agents from wearing masks on the job.*
- *Require ICE personnel to identify their agency when they approach individuals preventing impersonations of ICE and upgrade the offense to a felony.*



- ***Restrict ICE from operating within 500 yards of a school & childcare center, state courthouses or state government buildings, churches or religious institutions, health clinics, public parks, and significant cultural sites.***
- ***Support local law enforcement efforts to stop ICE from violating state laws and improperly using local law enforcement resources by ending cooperation agreements outside of the scope of keeping New Mexicans safe.***
- ***Sign a law prohibiting other states' National Guard troops being mobilized to New Mexico without the governor's permission.***

