

Date: Thursday, September 2, 2021 at 11:05 AM

Subject: FOR RELEASE: ABQ House Dems Announce Comprehensive Crime Package



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Thursday, September 2, 2021

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Albuquerque Reps Announce Comprehensive Crime Package to Address Violent Crime

Albuquerque, N.M. - House Democratic members from Albuquerque today released a proposed, comprehensive crime-fighting legislative package to address growing crime in the city and the state. The 17 members are urging their legislative colleagues' support of the package that addresses both immediate and long-term solutions to keep criminals off the streets, increases recruitment and retention of law enforcement officers, reforms pretrial detentions and supervision, and continues investments in families and communities to stop crime at its roots.

“This is an all-hands-on-deck crime-fighting package to bring down the disturbing levels of violent crime plaguing our streets,” said Rep. Moe Maestas, who represents the west side of Albuquerque. “We know from decades of tried and failed policies under the leadership of both parties that this issue is larger than bumper sticker solutions or simply adding longer criminal sentences. We must address the crime crisis at multiple levels, from our courts and police departments to policies which have shown success in rehabilitating and preventing New Mexicans from turning to crime in the first place.”

Albuquerque House Democratic Representatives advocating for this package include Majority Floor Leader Rep. Javier Martínez, House Judiciary Committee Chair Rep. Gail Chasey, Rep. Elizabeth “Liz” Thomson, Rep. Moe Maestas, Rep. Dayan Hochman Vigil, Rep. Daymon Ely,

Rep. Meredith Dixon, Rep. Joy Garratt, Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero, Rep. Pamelya Herndon, Rep. Brittney Barreras, Rep. Deborah Armstrong, Rep. Debbie Sarinana, Rep. Christine Trujillo, Rep. Andres Romero, Rep. Natalie Figueroa, and Rep. Georgene Louis.

Legislation within the package includes:

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

- Keep our kids safe by penalizing those who do not safely store firearms or fail to prevent children from easily accessing firearms.
- Reduce high-capacity magazines such as those used to injure four APD law enforcement officers in August.
- Establish the Office of Gun Violence Prevention.

INVESTING IN LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Provide law enforcement officer recruitment and retention policies, competitive salaries, and bonuses.
- Implement penalties for filing false reports on a police officer.

PREVENTION

- Fund the Crime Reduction Grant Program for local communities.
- Increase New Mexico's behavioral health workforce.
- Support youth physical and mental wellbeing through expanded community schools and school-based health centers.
- Increase safe community environment measures such as street lighting that are proven to discourage crime.

INTERVENTION

- Establish statewide Violence Intervention Program funding.
- Fund a 24/7 youth residential detox and treatment center, including services for youth survivors of sex trafficking.

PRETRIAL CHANGES

- Work with the Governor and courts to strengthen pre-trial detention to keep dangerous criminals locked up while awaiting trial.
- Increase funding for stronger pretrial supervision.

CRIMINAL PENALTIES

- Extend the statute of limitation and increase penalties for second-degree murder.
- Crackdown on those who own or operate an illegal "chop shop," to stop the black market for stolen vehicles.

- Criminalize the damage to property caused by the theft of copper, catalytic converters, and other valuable materials.

“This package takes a multi-faceted approach to address violent crime in our communities,” said Representative and House Judiciary Committee Chair Gail Chasey. “What’s become evident is that while we have been increasing our investments in long-term solutions like education, families, and mental and behavioral health, much more needs to be done to address the violence happening today. This crime-fighting package incorporates both lasting and immediate solutions at many levels, to ensure that our law enforcement officers, courts, schools, and communities work together to make our streets safer.”

LONG-TERM GOALS

Over the past three years, New Mexico House Democrats have made unprecedented and historic investments that help address the root causes of crime in our state - from early childhood and K-12 education, to rebuilding New Mexico’s dismantled behavioral health system, to boosting economic development. As the next step in long-term investments, House Democrats are fighting to continue these proven crime prevention measures by investing in affordable housing to keep families housed and secure.

Additionally, House Democrats have heard the calls from local law enforcement entities for increased support in the form of grant writing to access federal resources, and greater coordination between District Attorneys, police departments, and the courts to increase efficiency in apprehending and detaining criminals. Albuquerque House Democrats will also be working with community groups and local leaders to help make behavioral health services and pre-trial monitoring more readily available 24/7 in their communities.

These long-term investments will work to reduce poverty in New Mexico, and support families, youth, and communities, while providing law enforcement with the resources and tools they need to keep our streets safe.

Having formed a consensus, these Albuquerque House Democratic members will work in a bipartisan fashion with their House and Senate colleagues and urge Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham to place these critical items on the call for the upcoming 30-day session.

Members are available for interviews upon request.

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