



State of New Mexico

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

March 22, 2025

REC'D NW-SEC. OF STATE
2025 MAR 22 AM 8:56

SENATE EXECUTIVE MESSAGE NO. 16

The Honorable Mimi Stewart, President Pro Tempore
and Members of the New Mexico State Senate
State Capitol Building
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

President Pro Tempore Stewart and Members of the Senate:

I have decided to veto SENATE BILL 17, as amended ("SB 17"), which, among other things, amends NMSA 1978, § 31-21-10 (2023).

Let me say at the outset that I support modernizing the metrics used by our State Parole Board when considering applications from inmates. This legislation, however, created an unnecessary set of obstacles when it comes to removing members from the board.

Currently, members of the Commission may be promptly removed by the Governor. *See* N.M. Const. art. V, § 5. As drafted, SB 17 provides that "[m]embers of the parole board may be removed only for incompetence, neglect of duty or malfeasance in office *after reasonable notice and a public hearing*["] (Emphasis added). This provision unnecessarily complicates and lengthens the removal process. Who presides over the hearing? Who presents the case for removal to the presiding officer? SB 17 does not answer any of these questions and, if enacted, would make it virtually impossible to remove a board member until additional legislation could be enacted to address the problem.

I appreciate the bill's attempt to provide board members with additional per diems in order to recognize all the work they do to prepare for hearings. I believe the State Parole Board should be a state agency such that board members can be compensated for their work and have their positions protected as state employees. To that end, I commit to submitting a special message authorizing such legislation to be introduced pursuant to Article IV, Section 5(B)(2) of the New Mexico Constitution.

Because of these issues, and pursuant to my authority under Article IV, Section 22 of the New Mexico Constitution, I have vetoed SENATE BILL 17, as amended, enacted by the Fifty-Seventh Legislature, First Session, 2025.

Respectfully yours,

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

RECEIVED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Time: 8:56 a.m. p.m.
Date: 3/22 2025

By *[Signature]*
Secretary of State

Time: 9-11 a.m. p.m.
Date: March 22 2025

By *[Signature]*
Chief Clerk of the Senate