



New Mexico State Senate Confirms Governor Bill Richardson's Appointment of Michelle Lujan Grisham As Secretary of Health

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SANTA FE- The New Mexico State Senate today unanimously confirmed Governor Bill Richardson's appointment of Michelle Lujan Grisham as Secretary of the Department of Health. Governor Richardson made the appointment last August following the resignation of former Secretary Patricia Montoya.

"Secretary Grisham is putting her extensive experience and knowledge of the healthcare system, not to mention her limitless energy and passion to work for all New Mexicans," said Governor Bill Richardson. "I am confident Michelle will help continue the progress we have made reducing the number of New Mexicans without health insurance, increasing access to quality affordable healthcare, and ensuring the health and safety of our children."

Grisham previously served for 12 years as director of the State Agency on Aging, which Governor Richardson later elevated to Cabinet-level status as the Department of Aging and Long-Term Services.

The Department of Health is the largest agency in state government, with more than 3,800 employees and a budget of about \$450 million. Best known for the 54 public health offices it runs throughout the state, the department also is responsible for overseeing quality and licensing requirements in the state's health facilities, contracting for behavioral health services, operating seven facilities that provide long-term care, substance abuse or rehabilitative services, overseeing services paid for by the Medicaid Developmentally Disabled Waiver and operating the state scientific laboratory.

Grisham, 45, is a 12th-generation New Mexican who lives in Albuquerque. She graduated from the University of New Mexico School of Law and served as director of

the state bar's Lawyer Referral for the Elderly Program before becoming director of the Agency on Aging. She has two daughters.

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