

May 12, 2023
ACNP Honoric Awards Committee
Re: Public Service Award Nomination

Dear ACNP Liaison Committee:

It is my honor to nominate Governor of New Mexico Michelle Lujan-Grisham for the seventh annual ACNP Public Service Award in recognition of her substantial contributions to affect policy and her commitment to improve mental health and addictions in our country.

Lujan Grisham has had a broad and inclusive influence on behavioral health policy. Throughout her years of service, she has been a fierce champion for senior citizens, veterans, and individuals living with disabilities. She has sponsored state and national legislation to better the lives of Americans living with mental health conditions.

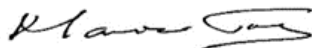
On the national level, Lujan-Grisham served as a multi-term State Representative. She participated as a member, and then Chair, of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus. In that role, she often exhorted the federal government for healthcare equity for this population. In addition, in 2013, Lujan sponsored the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act (H.R. 1507), a bipartisan effort that relied on the neuroscience to increase diagnosis of this disease and related dementias, leading to better care and outcomes for Americans. She twice introduced the Care Corps Act (2017, 2020) to address the growing demand for quality community and in-home supports for seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities including mental illness.

In 2017, as part of the national NM delegation, Lujan Grisham requested the U.S. HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) investigate whether New Mexico was properly and effectively serving people with behavioral health needs. With the OIG's systematic research (2019) report in hand, Governor Lujan-Grisham prioritized her behavioral health blueprint to improve the lives of New Mexicans. Her emphasis has been on growing the behavioral health workforce, increasing the number of providers and services that will accept Medicaid, addressing specific needs for children and adolescents, and decreasing the state's high suicide rate. One example of this work is SB 317, that established the NM Health Care Affordability Fund which is dedicated to reducing the cost of health insurance and medical expenses for working families. The bill also prohibits copays and other cost sharing for people with insurance who seek behavioral health services.

Gov. Lujan-Grisham also prioritized policy change and education to increase access and treatment of addiction and substance use disorders in New Mexico. This is especially important given the New Mexico's rate of opioid addiction and deaths due to overdose and suicide. Two important initiatives include HB 52 (2022), that modernizes the state's Harm Reduction Act to better serve communities by allowing organizations across the state to distribute fentanyl test strips and other drug testing devices. Under her leadership, the state has substantially expanded Screening, Brief Intervention to Treatment (SBIRT) to help prevent more devastating SUDs.

These are just a few examples of Governor Lujan-Grisham's long career in supporting the values and priorities endorsed by the ACNP. The Liaison Committee would like to nominate Governor Lujan-Grisham as a Public Service Award nominee for 2023.

Sincerely,



Mauricio Tohen MD, DrPH, MBA
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Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
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