



State of New Mexico

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

REC'D WA-SEC. OF STATE
2025 APR 10 PM 3:52

April 10, 2025

SENATE EXECUTIVE MESSAGE NO. 24

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:

Pursuant to my authority under Article IV, Section 22 of the New Mexico Constitution, I have signed SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE RULES COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL 42, as amended, with certificate of correction ("SB 42"), enacted by the Fifty-Seventh Legislature, First Session, 2025.

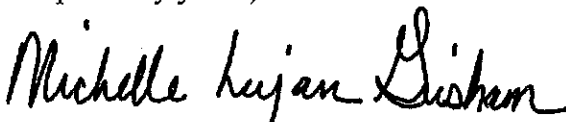
I am signing SB 42 because it achieves the important goal of requiring parents of substance-exposed newborns to participate in the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act ("CARA") program. For too long, the Children, Youth and Families Department ("CYFD") did not have meaningful tools to require parents to participate in CARA. This bill is an important step to fixing that problem. I note with great concern, however, that the Legislature took the opportunity to continue its unwarranted vendetta against CYFD in the rest of the bill. For example, the bill contains a totally unfunded mandate requiring CYFD employees to daily, monthly, and annually back up all devices and then retain them for seven years. Nobody disagrees that data retention is important, but this Legislature has again singled out CYFD employees from all other state employees and created a logistical nightmare for the agency and its employees. Rather than focusing on their critical work, CYFD employees will also have to take time out of their schedules to make sure that they are backing up their phones daily, monthly, and annually, all at risk of being terminated if they are unable to do so.

If the Legislature actually wanted to help children and CYFD, it would have fully funded the agency so that it could hire all the staff it needs to succeed. Indeed, a *Kevin S.* arbitrator ruled before the session that the Legislature "must" fully fund the agency in order for CYFD to meet its legal requirements. But the Legislature inexplicably failed to do so this session—as has been the case year after year.

The Legislature seems to be of the opinion that adding ever increasing administrative burdens on an agency that they refuse to fund at required levels will make children safer. They also seem to believe that piling on criticisms for problems that they bare some responsibility for creating will absolve them of their own neglect. They are wrong. One legislator took a moment of "personal privilege" in his committee to shed crocodile tears about problems at CYFD and proceeded to arrogantly and condescendingly call the leadership at the agency "failures." Ironically, this same legislator literally grew teary-eyed during a debate the following day when a colleague made what he considered to be a "personal attack" on his character on the senate floor, demonstrating that hypocrisy remains alive and well in our Legislature. It is so very easy to throw stones. It takes far more courage, however, to ask oneself what you can do to be a part of the solution.

In these challenging times, we should all make a commitment to step up and help our most vulnerable children. I encourage legislators and their families to consider becoming foster parents. Applications can be found at <https://pulltogether.cyfd.nm.gov/get-involved/adopt-or-foster-a-child/foster-a-child>. Or members of our citizen Legislature can apply for a job or volunteer opportunities at CYFD. Applications for employment and volunteer opportunities can be found at <https://www.cyfd.nm.gov/jobs>. It is far too easy to stand on the sidelines and criticize CYFD. I hope the Legislature will commit not only to fully funding CYFD, but also to do their part on an individual level to help make a difference in children's lives.

Respectfully yours,



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor

RECEIVED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Time: 3:32 a.m. (p.m.)
Date: 4/10 2025

For [Signature]
By [Signature]
Secretary of State

Time: 3:53 a.m. (p.m.)
Date: 4-10 2025

By [Signature]
for Chief Clerk of the Senate