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**Commissioner Garcia Richard, Senator Ivey-Soto
Join Governor Lujan Grisham for Signing of
Senate Bill 458**

New state law requires transparency in large scale State Land Office deals

SANTA FE, NM – Today, Commissioner Garcia Richard and Senator Ivey-Soto (D-15) joined Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham as she signed Senate Bill 458 into law. The new state law will require public notice and input prior to the land office taking final action on any proposed land sales, land exchanges and rights-of-way (ROW) permits for large-scale electrical transmission lines and oil/gas pipelines involving state trust lands. Commissioner Garcia Richard has already implemented these changes under her authority as Commissioner, but with the Governor’s signature, all future Commissioners will be required to provide the same level of transparency.

“This is an example of a person who was committed on the campaign trail to improved transparency, government accountability, and to be the custodian of our public lands in a meaningful, protective, and productive way so that every New Mexican has the benefit of our entrusted public lands and a Senator who helped her make that a reality for every single New Mexican,” **Governor Lujan Grisham said after signing the bill.**

Senator Ivey-Soto added, “One of the really important aspects of what the Commissioner brought forward is making sure that there is a hearing in the community where activity is going to take place.”

“This is a huge success for the land office and for communities across New Mexico. I am grateful to Governor Lujan Grisham for signing this bill and to Senator Ivey-Soto for being a champion of transparency in our government,” **Commissioner Garcia Richard said.** “When we are making decisions that involve state trust lands, which belong to the citizens of New Mexico, everyone should have ample opportunity to provide feedback on those decisions. Thanks to the Governor, they now have a seat at the table.”



The new state law mandates notice of a proposed land sale, land exchange or certain right-of-way permits to be published on the land office’s website and in a newspaper of general circulation in Santa Fe as well as in the community near the site of the proposed activity. Public meetings are to occur near the location of the proposed activity as well.

Public notices will provide ample details about the proposed action including: descriptions of the state trust land offered for sale or exchange or on which the ROW is to be located; summaries of potential effects the proposed transaction or ROW on surrounding lands; detailed information about the public meeting and contact information for a land office representative who can provide additional information regarding the proposal.

Oil, gas, and mineral production, ranching and farming, and commercial development on State Trust Lands support public schools, seven universities, New Mexico Military Institute, New Mexico School for the Deaf, New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, three hospitals, correctional facilities, water conservation projects, and public building construction and repair. In fiscal year 2018, the State Land Office collected \$852 million from lease payments, oil and gas lease sale earnings, rights-of-way, permits, interest, fees, and oil, gas, and mineral royalties.