



GREATER LAS CRUCES
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



February 20, 2019

Dear Representative,

House Bill 267 is moving through the Legislature with strong bipartisan support. The undersigned Chambers of Commerce throughout our state believe this legislation will bring earnest, true, and fundamental reform to the operation of our state's criminal justice system – improving everything from policing and prosecution to incarceration, diversion, and rehabilitation strategies. HB 267 will make crime-fighting and crime prevention more data-driven, efficient, and effective in New Mexico.

For the first time, we will be able to follow a person's journey through the justice system, regardless of whether they commit crimes in different places or use different names when they are arrested. We will use analytics to help our law enforcement agencies focus their limited resources on those criminals who are driving our crime rate upward, while deploying new and proven approaches to get help for those who commit lower-level crimes, who are often motivated by substance abuse or behavioral health challenges.

Is it a tough-on-crime bill? Yes, but not in the traditional sense. As a result of HB 267, we fully expect that our criminal justice agencies will be better equipped to identify, track, and aggressively prosecute the most serious repeat offenders in our state – who have been able to take advantage of inefficiencies and a lack of sophistication in our justice system for far too long.

We are writing today to ask for your help in making the framework and essential policy changes contained in HB 267 a reality – especially those that relate to data collection, sharing, and analysis. Doing so will cost \$3.8 million, according to the recommendation of former Supreme Court Justice Ed Chavez, who chaired the bipartisan task force that created HB 267. This money is not included in the current version of the state budget.

Full implementation of the legislation will require additional expenditures over time. But in this session, we respectfully request that you allocate a portion of your discretionary recurring appropriations to this important effort and help us raise the \$3.8 million necessary to get this legislation off the ground. Getting smarter about how we tackle crime and administer justice is the most important step we can take to make New Mexico a safer place to live – one that is more welcoming to tourists, prospective new residents, and businesses alike. With the enactment and funding of HB 267, we can begin to remove crime as an impediment to growth in our state.

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to call Terri Cole, President and CEO of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, at (505) 239-6553 or Justice Ed Chavez at (505) 385-4469.

Thank you for your ongoing service to New Mexico and for your interest in making our communities safer.

Sincerely,



Terri Cole
President & CEO
Greater Albuquerque
Chamber of Commerce



Debbi Moore
President & CEO
Greater Las Cruces
Chamber of Commerce



Bill Lee
President & CEO
Gallup McKinley County
Chamber of Commerce



Rob Black
President & CEO
New Mexico Association
of Commerce and Industry