

NEW MEXICO PUBLIC REGULATION COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS

DISTRICT 1 CYNTHIA B. HALL
DISTRICT 2 JEFFERSON L. BYRD
DISTRICT 3 VALERIE ESPINOZA, VICE CHAIR
DISTRICT 4 THERESA BECENTI-AGUILAR, CHAIR
DISTRICT 5 STEPHEN FISCHMANN



P.O. Box 1269
1120 Paseo de Peralta
Santa Fe, NM 87504-1269

INTERIM CHIEF OF STAFF
Jason N. Montoya, P.E.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF COMMISSIONER VALERIE ESPINOZA

SANTA FE, NM:

Commissioner Espinoza has been made aware of a press release published by ProgressNow NM. She has had an opportunity to look into and address the details of the allegations. She states that she has fully cooperated with Ms. Stephanie Maez's information requests.

The travel and conferences attended by Commissioner Espinoza are relevant to her duties as an elected official. The travel documentation has been prepared, submitted and approved in accordance with Public Regulation Commission internal policies and State of New Mexico statutes, policies and procedures. Documentation reflecting Commissioner Espinoza's compliance with all statutes, policies and procedures with respect to reimbursement in the amount of \$1,627.48 to CTIA is attached to this press release for your review.

Commissioner Espinoza has spent less than the allocated yearly budget given to each commissioner for the purpose of meeting her statutory educational and ethics requirements, including training at the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), New Mexico State University Edge, New Mexico State University Center for Public Utilities, and Michigan State University's Institute for Public Utilities. Travel for all commissioners is pre-approved by the PRC Chief of Staff. Additionally, the commissioners' annual budget includes their office supplies, vehicle maintenance, subscriptions, memberships, fees, dues, conference registrations, and office equipment.

The National Association of Latino Elected Officials Conference (NALEO) attended by Commissioner Espinoza included topics relevant to her role and responsibility as a Latina and leader of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission.

Situations related to difficult people and circumstances, including workplace safety have arisen during Commissioner Espinoza's tenure at the New Public Regulation Commission. Attending a conference that deals with difficult people is clearly a necessity given the climate of today's uncertain and unsettling environment.

In reference to allegations that the responsive records were incomplete, the information was made available to the Information Technology Division and the Legal Department. IT and Legal reviewed the information for relevancy with respect to the IPRA request. IT performs and maintains the necessary backup of data and information.

It should be abundantly clear from the timing of these unfounded allegations that ProgressNow NM's real motivation is to retaliate against Commissioner Espinoza based on her recent votes in the current controversy related to the proposed closure of the San Juan Generating Station and the challenges to the applicability of the Energy Transition Act (ETA) based on New Mexico Constitution Section IV, Article 34 which prohibits acts of the legislature from affecting the rights of persons in pending cases.

Commissioner Espinoza is merely voicing her opinions and concerns for the citizens and ratepayers of New Mexico.

Commissioner Espinoza was not contacted by ProgressNow NM for the facts or given the opportunity to address their allegations prior to the issuance of their press release.

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The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (PRC) regulates the utilities, telecommunications, and motor carrier industries to ensure fair and reasonable rates, and to assure reasonable and adequate services to the public as provided by law. The PRC promotes public safety through the offices of State Fire Marshal, the Firefighter Training Academy, Pipeline Safety Bureau, and Transportation Division.

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Ms. Stephanie Maez
Executive Director
ProgressNow New Mexico
625 Silver Ave SW Suite 320
Albuquerque, NM 87102
Stephanie@progressNowNM.org

RE: IPRA Request of Commissioner Espinoza's travel expenditures, Additional Item

Ms. Maez,

The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC) provides you an additional requested item not originally included in the fulfillment of your original IPRA request.

Your IPRA request dated 05/21/19 requested "electronic records of payments, reimbursements and invoices to or from Commissioner Espinoza."

NMPRC did not originally provide the reimbursement from Commissioner Espinoza to the State of New Mexico for the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association (CTIA) Conference made on 10/23/18. The documentation of Commissioner Espinoza's reimbursement to the State is attached to this correspondence for your review.

We truly apologize for our oversight on this issue and have updated our internal processes to make sure reimbursements of expenditures will be included on fulfillment of IPRA requests going forward.

Staff has issued a formal apology to Commissioner Espinoza for our error.

It would be greatly appreciated if your organization set the record straight with regards to this accusation.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Williamson".

Jim Williamson
Administrative Services Division Director

VALERIE L. ESPINOZA
SANTA FE, NM 87507-5337

08 Oct 23 2019

TO THE ORDER OF State of New Mexico \$1,276.46
One thousand two hundred seventy six and 46/100

LANB PO BOX 80
Las Alamos, NM 87530
(505) 554-1348

CTFA Refund Valerie Espinoza

43000/55000/1010030000/549000-307.60
547900-85

Valerie L. Espinoza
[Redacted]

FEB 28, 2019 95-101
1070
Date

Pay to the Order of AMPRC \$ 332.60
Three hundred thirty two and 60/100 Dollars

 **LANB**
Community Bank

Los Alamos National Bank
Albuquerque Jefferson
PO Box 60
Los Alamos, NM 87544

For: over payment [Redacted]

Valerie Espinoza
[Redacted]