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Attorney General Balderas Announces First Meeting as Chair of New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy Board; Sets Priorities

AG Balderas promises to focus on rebuilding community trust in law enforcement and providing officers the improved and robust training they need to keep New Mexicans safe

Española, NM - Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas commented on chairing the upcoming meeting of the Law Enforcement Academy board:

“As New Mexico’s chief law enforcement officer, I am acutely aware of the solemn duties and responsibilities that fall to me as the chair of the Law Enforcement Academy (LEA) board when I raise the gavel for my first meeting with the board in Española. I intend to be a thoughtful and active chair and expect that this will be among the most aggressive and active boards in the country. We are coming together at a critical time nationally and locally, as the divide between law enforcement and the communities we serve continues to grow, from Ferguson to Baltimore and even here in New Mexico. I look forward to working with the other members of the board to keep the bond between law enforcement and the communities they serve strong by improving training for our officers, while creating standards of accountability that will reinforce the public’s trust. As chair of the LEA board and the state’s top law enforcement officer, I propose three priorities for this board:

- First, I believe that accountability starts at the top and I believe this board must maintain the highest standards of ethical and transparent public service as we carry out our duties pursuant to state law.
- Second, I intend to balance the need to train and support our officers, giving them the tools they need to keep our communities safe, with the need to ensure that all officer discipline is handled appropriately and timely, as the public’s trust in law enforcement is at risk any time accountability is questioned.
- Third, I will fully review the LEA curriculum to ensure that it is up-to-date with the best training available for officers, focusing on safety, but also ensuring that it is designed to meet the needs of our culturally diverse state, as well as addressing the needs of the members of our communities who struggle with mental health challenges.

Under my leadership, the LEA board will exercise every power at its disposal to ensure that New Mexico’s law enforcement officers are well-trained and appropriately licensed before they ever interact with the public, and that law enforcement respects and preserves the dignity of all cultures. I look forward to working with the other board members representing police and sheriffs’ offices, tribal police, district attorneys, line officers and the general public to ensure that

training across the state reflects these priorities and to ensure that we work together to promote respect for law enforcement and accountability to those we serve.”

The Law Enforcement Academy Board will meet in Española on June 9-10, 2015.

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