

STAFF REPORTS

NEW MEXICO GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS,
Mike Miller, PBPA

The second session of the 54th Legislature is just around the corner. The session will begin on January 21, 2020 at noon and will adjourn at noon on February 20, 2020.

This is Governor Lujan Grisham's first 30-day session. As you are aware, by the constitution this session is limited to financial matters unless the Governor asks the legislature to consider other matters. In the past the 30-day sessions have been very crowded with items the Governor has asked to be considered.

Mike Miller recently attended a luncheon hosted by the Governor where she outlined a few of the items that she will ask the legislature to consider:

Early Childhood Education – she will ask the legislature to appropriate \$400 million to fund an early childhood education program. She has already appointed a person to head up this initiative.

Free College Tuition for NM Students – The Governor has stated that she would like to use general fund monies to grant NM students free tuition to attend institutions of higher education, including vocational training within the State. NM already provides lottery scholarships to NM students attending 4-year institutions within the State.

Pension Reform – The NM Public Employees Retirement Fund is in disarray and threatening the State's bond rating. This is a subject that has the opportunity to consume a lot of time.

The Legalization of Recreational Marijuana – The Governor is going to ask the legislature to consider legalizing marijuana. This is also a subject that will bring a lot of emotion and debate during this short session. Earlier this year the Governor appointed a work group to craft the legislation and learn from other states that have been down this path. The report and other information from this work group may be found at www.marijuanaworkgroup.com. Many consider that this legislation will fall short this session due to the lack of a very few votes in the Senate.

The Governor also mentioned that she would also ask the legislature to consider some criminal justice reforms but was not specific. She has also reached out to legislators asking for items they would like to have considered.

With all 112 legislators up for election in 2020 there is likely to be all sorts of legislation introduced for the purpose of campaign fodder in the upcoming election. Regardless, we will be on hand to defend the industry and report the activities of the session.