

Governor: House Bill 7 will drive innovation, job creation and business development

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SANTA FE – Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham on Friday issued the following statement after the New Mexico Senate overwhelmingly approved House Bill 7, bipartisan legislation that will create Centers of Excellence at four institutions of higher learning, transforming our universities into genuine economic engines that will grow industries and create jobs across the state. The House overwhelmingly approved the bipartisan legislation March 1.

“We need to pave the way to exciting career opportunities in cutting-edge fields through our institutions of higher education,” Gov. Lujan Grisham said. “As we work diligently to diversify our economy and keep our talented young adults here in New Mexico, our schools will become hotbeds of innovation, catalyzing and transforming key economic growth sectors.”

House Bill 7 creates four Centers of Excellence at New Mexico higher education institutions, supporting and driving innovation in growing economic sectors and expanding research and industry across the state. The legislation, sponsored by Reps. Tomás Salazar and Micaela Cadena and Sen. Gay Kernan, directs the Centers of Excellence to take part in collaborative public-private partnerships to take bold approaches in job creation and business development.

The legislation creates a Center of Excellence for sustainable and renewable energy at San Juan College, revitalizing a leading program and aligning with the priorities established in the Energy Transition Act, SB 489, which directs the development of renewable energy production and renewable jobs workforce training in the San Juan region.

A Center of Excellence for sustainable agriculture will launch at New Mexico State University, supporting the university’s existing value-added agriculture research and fostering partnerships with private industry, including New Mexico’s emerging hemp industry, which will be aided by HB 581, the Hemp Manufacturing Act.

The University of New Mexico Health Sciences Center will be home to a Center of Excellence for bioscience, expanding crucial medical and scientific research and innovation.

A Center of Excellence for cybersecurity will be housed at New Mexico Tech, ranked second in the nation for its cybersecurity program in 2015 and certified as a Center for Academic Excellence in the field by the Department of Homeland Security and the National Security Administration.