

SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNORDavid Martin, *Cabinet Secretary*Butch Tongate, *Deputy Secretary***NEWS RELEASE****February 16, 2012**

**Contact:** Jim Winchester  
Communications Director  
New Mexico Environment Department  
(505)231-8800 / [jim.winchester@state.nm.us](mailto:jim.winchester@state.nm.us)

**NMED Director Appointed to Federal Worker Health Board**

*Appointee Loretta Valerio heads up NMED's Office of Nuclear Workers' Advocacy*

(Santa Fe, NM) – President Obama has announced his intent to appoint Loretta R. Valerio as a member to the National Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health. Ms. Valerio will also continue her current role as Director of the New Mexico Office of Nuclear Workers' Advocacy.



“This is a great honor,” Ms. Valerio said. “It is my hope that this appointment will bring more attention to our mission to provide fair compensation to those workers and families who have been affected by radiation and other forms of exposure at Department of Energy (DOE) sites.”

Ms. Valerio has served New Mexico claimants under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) since 2007. She has intervened to expedite and improve the claims adjudication for hundreds of EEOICPA claimants in New Mexico. Many New Mexico claimants worked, or had family members who worked at Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) or Sandia National Laboratory (SNL) in the past.

“Loretta Valerio has assisted hundreds of former New Mexico workers at DOE sites, including former workers and families associated with the Manhattan Project in Los Alamos,” New Mexico Environment Secretary David Martin said. “Her background as both a compassionate and fair advocate for nuclear workers will be invaluable on a national level.”

The National Advisory Board on Radiation and Worker Health was established in December 2000 to provide advice to the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services. The board develops guidelines to assess the likelihood that an individual with cancer sustained the cancer in the performance of duty at a DOE or Atomic Weapons Employer (AWE) facility.

Prior to her appointment to the New Mexico Office of Nuclear Workers' Advocacy, Ms. Valerio performed seven years of contractor work as a local caseworker and outreach staff for the U.S.

Department of Labor administering EEOICPA. Earlier in her career, Ms. Valerio was a contractor employee at Los Alamos National Laboratory where she was involved in the administration of safety related operations, training and communications at the site.

For more information on Ms. Valerio's appointment, please go to:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/02/10/president-obama-announces-more-key-administration-posts> and/or <http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/ocas/ocasadv.html>.

For additional information, contact Jim Winchester at (505) 231-8800 or [jim.winchester@state.nm.us](mailto:jim.winchester@state.nm.us).

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