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## **Governor Susana Martinez Appoints Butch Tongate as Cabinet Secretary for the Environment Department**

**Santa Fe, NM** — Today, Governor Susana Martinez announced her appointment of Butch Tongate as Secretary of the New Mexico Environment Department. Tongate has served as deputy secretary of the Environment Department since 2011. Prior to that, he served with the Environment Department for 23 years in various roles, including Solid Waste Bureau chief and Environmental Protection Division director.

"I'm proud to have Butch take over the helm of the Environment Department," Governor Martinez said. "He's been an integral part of our team since the beginning of the Administration, and the depth and breadth of his experience will be a strong asset as we continue protecting New Mexico's environment in a balanced and responsible way."

Secretary Tongate will take over leadership of the Environment Department following the recent resignation of former Secretary Ryan Flynn. This transition comes on the heels of the Administration negotiating the largest settlement in the history of the U.S. between a state and the Department of Energy, holding the EPA accountable for the Gold King Mine spill, and taking action on the Kirtland Air Force Base spill.

"I'm grateful for Governor Martinez's leadership, and I look forward to continuing to work with her to protect New Mexico's environment," said Secretary Tongate. "We serve New Mexicans best when we take a sound and balanced approach to environmental policy – one that protects our air, water, and land, while at the same time allowing businesses to grow. I am honored to lead the Department in continuing these efforts."

Earlier in his career, Tongate served as a legislative consultant in Washington D.C. and as director of marketing for Army programs at Hughes Aircraft Company. Tongate is

also a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland, and a Master of Science in Systems Management from the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

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