NEWS RELEASE
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James C. Kenney confirmed by Senate as New Mexico Environment Secretary

Santa Fe—The Senate voted unanimously to confirm James C. Kenney as Secretary of the New Mexico Environment Department on Monday.

Kenney brings to the department more than 20 years of experience with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, most recently as a senior policy advisor on oil and gas based in Albuquerque.

"I'm thrilled Secretary Kenney is officially on board," Gov. Lujan Grisham said. "Already, he's proven himself a diligent, conscientious and whip-smart leader, and I know NMED will be in the best possible hands."

During his tenure at the EPA, Kenney worked in collaboration with states, tribes, federal agencies and industry to develop policies supporting environmentally responsible oil and natural gas development.

He also served in an enforcement role, leading investigations into violations of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act and other flagship EPA statutes and regulations.

Kenney’s immediate priorities include working to reduce methane emissions – in collaboration with other state agencies – in support of the Climate Change Task Force established by Gov. Lujan Grisham’s executive order and holding the Air Force accountable for groundwater contamination at the state’s Air Force bases.

An environmental engineer by trade, Kenney will use science to tackle some of New Mexico’s toughest environmental challenges, ensure entities operating in New Mexico are in compliance with state rules and regulations and employ innovative strategies to protect and restore New Mexico’s environment.

“I am honored the Governor and New Mexico Legislature have put their trust in me to lead NMED,” Kenney said.

“It was science, innovation, collaboration and compliance that served me well at the EPA and I am confident they will serve me well here at the New Mexico Environment Department.”

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