

1 SENATE BILL 456  
2 **57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025**  
3 INTRODUCED BY  
4 Joseph Cervantes  
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10 AN ACT

11 RELATING TO THE LEGISLATURE; CREATING A PERMANENT JOINT INTERIM  
12 COURTS AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE; PROVIDING POWERS AND DUTIES;  
13 PROVIDING FOR COMMITTEE STAFF.  
14

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

16 SECTION 1. A new section of Chapter 2 NMSA 1978 is  
17 enacted to read:

18 "[NEW MATERIAL] CREATION OF COMMITTEE--MEMBERS--  
19 APPOINTMENT--TERMS.--

20 A. A permanent joint interim committee of the  
21 legislature to be called the "courts and justice committee" is  
22 created.

23 B. The committee is composed of eight members. The  
24 New Mexico legislative council shall appoint four members from  
25 the house of representatives and four members from the senate.

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1 At the time of making the appointment, the New Mexico  
2 legislative council shall designate the chair and vice chair of  
3 the committee. Members shall be appointed so as to give the  
4 two major political parties in each house the same  
5 proportionate representation on the committee as prevails in  
6 each house; provided, however, that in no event shall either of  
7 such parties have less than one member from each house on the  
8 committee.

9 C. A vacancy on the committee shall be filled by  
10 appointment in the same manner as the original appointment.

11 D. No action shall be taken by the committee if a  
12 majority of the total membership from either house on the  
13 committee rejects such action."

14 SECTION 2. A new section of Chapter 2 NMSA 1978 is  
15 enacted to read:

16 "[NEW MATERIAL] POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE--  
17 SUBPOENA POWER.--

18 A. The courts and justice committee shall conduct a  
19 continuing study of the programs, agencies, policies, issues  
20 and needs relating to courts and justice, including review and  
21 study of the statutes, constitutional provisions, rules and  
22 court decisions governing such statutes, rules, programs,  
23 agencies, issues and needs. The committee shall also study the  
24 full continuum of programs and services available and needed  
25 for people who are involved in or otherwise affected by the

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1 justice system.

2 B. The courts and justice committee has the power  
3 to conduct hearings and to administer oaths. The committee has  
4 the power to subpoena attendance of witnesses and production of  
5 documents, which may be enforced through any district court of  
6 the state. The subpoena power shall be used only upon approval  
7 by a majority of committee members and shall be related to the  
8 committee's powers and duties provided in this section.

9 Service of committee subpoena shall be made by a sheriff or a  
10 member of the New Mexico state police division of the  
11 department of public safety and shall be served without cost to  
12 the committee.

13 C. A state agency or political subdivision of the  
14 state shall, upon request, furnish and make available to the  
15 courts and justice committee documents, material or information  
16 requested by the members of the committee or the committee's  
17 staff."

18 SECTION 3. A new section of Chapter 2 NMSA 1978 is  
19 enacted to read:

20 "[NEW MATERIAL] SUBCOMMITTEES.--Subcommittees of the  
21 courts and justice committee shall be created only by majority  
22 vote of all members appointed to the committee and with the  
23 prior approval of the New Mexico legislative council. A  
24 subcommittee shall be composed of at least one member from the  
25 senate and one member from the house of representatives, and at

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1 least one member of the minority party shall be a member of the  
2 subcommittee. All meetings and expenditures of a subcommittee  
3 shall be approved by the full committee in advance of such  
4 meeting or expenditure, and the approval shall be shown in the  
5 minutes of the committee."

6 SECTION 4. A new section of Chapter 2 NMSA 1978 is  
7 enacted to read:

8 "[NEW MATERIAL] REPORT.--The courts and justice committee  
9 shall make a report of its findings and recommendations for the  
10 consideration of each session of the legislature. The report  
11 and recommendations, including any necessary legislation, shall  
12 be made available to the New Mexico legislative council on or  
13 before December 15 preceding each session."

14 SECTION 5. A new section of Chapter 2 NMSA 1978 is  
15 enacted to read:

16 "[NEW MATERIAL] STAFF.--The staff for the courts and  
17 justice committee shall be provided by the legislative council  
18 service."