

Corrections Oversight

Representative Micaela Lara Cadena

Barron Jones, Senior Policy Strategist, American
Civil Liberties Union of
New Mexico (ACLU-NM)



Rest in Power

Kelly Garcia Chavez



Kelly Garcia at the New Mexico State Capitol.

Who we Are

Representative Micaela Lara Cadena

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Why Independent Oversight?

We have the authority to incarcerate people, we must be accountable to that authority

- Current oversight isn't working
- Mismanagement and dysfunction have been raised by staff, incarcerated people, and those with loved ones incarcerated
- New Mexicans need and deserve transparency
- It's our responsibility to increase safety within the system, for the people locked up and for the people working in corrections

Key components

- Compel NMCD to engage in public rule making process
 - Currently NMCD operates under procedures enacted by Secretary
 - ACLU of NM IPRA request
- Establish New Mexico Corrections Oversight Commission
 - Commission to be made up of stakeholders across a spectrum of lived experiences and expertise including people that have been incarcerated, people who have had loved ones incarcerated
 - Commission to be appointed by Legislature, Judiciary, and Executive

Key Responsibilities

- New Mexico Corrections Review Commission to:
 - Review Commission to select Ombudsperson
 - Ombudsperson to report to Review Commission
 - Ombudsperson/staff to have gold key access to NMCD facilities and operations
 - Ombudsperson to investigate and compile reports
 - Commission to makes administrative and legislative recommendations as appropriate

Timeline

- Establish/re-establish rule making process (FY24)
- Establish Oversight Commission (FY24)
 - Select Ombudsperson and hire staff (FY 25)
- Begin review/oversight (FY25)

What other places are doing

- Washington state of created Office of Ombudsman (2018)
- New Jersey expanded the scope and power of the existing Office of Ombudsman (2019)
- Illinois — John Howard Association (nonprofit)