

Dear Editor,

Did you know that vacancy rates in 911 dispatch centers and police agencies are, on average, more than 20%, and 10% of those employed have not yet been certified (required training), threatening local 24/7 emergency response? These conditions increase response times, and public safety staff may arrive exhausted due to long shifts. We can't effectively address crime under these conditions. Senate Bill 13, entitled "Public Safety Recruitment Bureau," sponsored by Maestas and Szczepanski, is stalled in the Senate Rules Committee despite a good deal of legislative support.

SB 13 provides funding and innovative solutions, including a media campaign to reach youth, women and minorities, and social media strategies. Over 100 police agencies supported centralized recruiting in a recent survey. Gallup City Police, McKinley County Sheriff and our small local agencies don't have time, resources, or expertise to launch effective recruiting campaigns.

This bill will professionalize aggressive outreach inside NM and to surrounding states, complementing & leveraging local recruiting efforts. We need more and better qualified people to pursue careers in public safety. SB 13 also supports retention and professional development for our public safety workforce.

Please contact the governor's office and your local senator's office to ask for support of SB 13. Your help is needed urgently if this bill is to be heard. These resources are desperately needed to make a difference in community safety and resiliency.

Sincerely,

Rachel Feldman

A Citizen of New Mexico

Crisis response jeopardized

Written by gallupsun
Friday, 09 February 2024 13:09
