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February 3, 2022

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The sordid story of HB 132: Predatory Legislating

Santa Fe – The saga of [HB 132](#) continues. Policy debate aside, the introduction of the HB 132 has been rife with controversy and continues to breed resentment amongst members of both parties in the NM House of Representatives.

The HB 132 sponsor originally introduced the bill with language that included an appropriation in order to bypass the constitutional process of receiving a message from the Governor during the thirty-day legislative session. During the House Judiciary Committee for HB 132, the sponsor was asked and clearly laid out that she had removed the section dealing with an appropriation because it was no longer needed, as it was only necessary to avoid the process to get the Governor's approval. Additionally, the Speaker of the House was forced to appoint an additional Democrat Representative to the Judiciary Committee in order to have enough votes to move the bill forward. Speaker Brian Egolf (D-Santa Fe) controversially appointed retiring State Rep. Debra Armstrong (D-Albuquerque), who had removed herself from legislative committee assignments up until her vote was absolutely needed to vote in favor of HB 132.

Kicking off the final 9-days of the 2022 Legislative Session, the House Labor, Veterans' and Military Affairs Committee Chair, State Rep. Eliseo Alcon (D- Milan) made a surprise motion to reassign HB 132 to the House Rules and Order of Business Committee in order to rectify the deceptive process that was utilized to move HB 132 forward. Ultimately, after the Speaker and Democrat Leadership spent much time scrambling in and out of the Chamber, Chairman Alcon rescinded his motion.

The Speaker then went to Governor Lujan Grisham and asked her for a message, a request she granted, giving the Speaker the final push to get HB 132 to the floor.

The actions taken by the Speaker throughout this process have left long serving members of his own caucus questioning his actions. Rep Miguel Garcia and Rep Eliseo Alcon both objected to the process going on in the House leaving the public questioning whether or not Democrats can get HB 132 over the finish line.

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