



**BETTER TOGETHER**  
NEW MEXICO

P.O. Box 95735  
Albuquerque, NM 87199  
(505) 235-6323

RE: Support **HB 278 Voluntary Manslaughter Exclusions**

Mr./Madame Chair and Committee Members:

Better Together New Mexico (BTNM) brings together hundreds of advocacy groups and thousands of New Mexicans statewide. Our mission is to unite New Mexicans through grassroots initiatives and work to positively shape the decisions that affect our lives, families, and communities.

BTNM strongly supports HB 278 Voluntary Manslaughter Exclusions as a critical measure to enhance public safety in New Mexico. This bill ensures that anyone who commits voluntary manslaughter, even in the heat of the moment, will be charged with a third-degree felony, carrying a minimum sentence of six years in prison. Additionally, those who commit involuntary manslaughter will face a fourth-degree felony, resulting in at least 18 months of imprisonment.

Stronger penalties like these help deter individuals from engaging in reckless or retaliatory violence, particularly in situations involving resistance to lawful arrest. By holding offenders accountable, this legislation keeps dangerous criminals off our streets, creating safer communities for all New Mexicans.

For these reasons and others articulated by the bill sponsor, we strongly urge you to vote YES on HB 278 to support the safety and well-being of all New Mexicans.

Thank you for considering my comments,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla J. Sonntag".

**Carla J. Sonntag**  
President & CEO