



State of New Mexico
WORKERS' COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION

MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

ROBERT E. DOUCETTE, JR.
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Diana Sandoval-Tapia, 505-841-6052
Diana.Sandoval@wca.nm.gov

Tony Couture, David Skinner Appointed Workers' Compensation Judges

Albuquerque, N.M. April 6, 2023 – New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has appointed Tony Couture and David Skinner to serve as workers' compensation judges for the Workers' Compensation Administration (WCA). Both will assume their positions on April 8, 2023. Couture will resume his prior caseload. Skinner will fill the newly created seat in the WCA's Las Cruces field office, primarily handling a caseload from southern New Mexico. Both have previously served as WCA judges.

Couture was initially hired as a WCA mediator in January 2017, after spending 10 years in private law practice, and was then appointed WCA judge in August 2017. Couture continued serving as a judge until late 2022, when he resigned to return to nursing, a career in which he worked prior to attending law school. In addition to his previous employment at the WCA, Couture's workers' compensation experience includes representing both employers/insurers and injured workers. Couture earned his law degree in 2007 from the University of New Mexico School of Law. Prior to his legal career, he worked as a registered nurse, in both emergency room and in-patient settings, and as a computer scientist. Originally from Sheboygan, Wis., Couture grew up along the shores of Lake Michigan, and served in the United States Coast Guard. Couture moved to New Mexico in 1982. He is married and has three children.

"I'm honored to be reappointed to serve the state of New Mexico along with the other fine appointees," Couture said.

Skinner previously worked as a WCA judge from 2011 to 2017. He earned a juris doctor degree in 1987 *cum laude* from the University of New Mexico School of Law and worked in private practice for various Albuquerque law firms. He was recognized as a specialist in workers' compensation law by the State Bar of New Mexico prior to his initial WCA judge appointment. Since his departure from the WCA, Skinner has worked in personal injury and workers' compensation law, and since July 2022, has served as a judge *pro tempore* for the WCA, handling lump sum settlement and Director's Enforcement hearings.

"I am excited about my reappointment and look forward to returning to the bench, this time in Las Cruces," Skinner said. "It's a new idea for a new position."

There are currently five workers' compensation judge positions in the WCA's Adjudication Bureau based out of Albuquerque and one newly created judge position in the WCA's Las Cruces field office. Workers' compensation judges hear and decide disputes over benefits due to injured workers throughout New Mexico.

##