



Los Alamos

Prepared by League of
Women Voters

Featuring:
Voting Information
Statewide Candidates
Local Candidates
Constitutional Amendments
General Obligation Bonds
County Charter Amendments

Los Alamos General Election Voter Guide 2026



For an online version of this
Voter Guide, go to "Vote411.
org" or use this QR code:



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Los Alamos Voter Guide 2026 General Election

Prepared by the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization for women and men, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

As a non-partisan organization, the League does not support, oppose, or make recommendations regarding any political party or candidate.

Essential Dates

Voter Registration Closes

Tuesday, October 6: Applications must be received by 5 pm at the County Clerk's office in the Los Alamos County Municipal Building or on-line through the NM Secretary of State Portal (NMVote.org) by 11:59 p.m. **This is the final date you can change your affiliation from one major party to another.**

Same Day, In-person Voter Registration. The voter must register and vote on the same day in this period.

Tuesday, October 6 thru Friday, October 16: Monday thru Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

Saturday, Oct. 17 thru Saturday, Oct. 31: Monday thru Saturday, 8 am to 6 pm.

Tuesday, November 3: 7 am to 7 pm.

Absentee Voting by Mail

Tuesday, October 6: Absentee ballots will begin to be mailed out.

Registered voters wishing to vote absentee by mail must request an absentee ballot application.

The last day to request an absentee ballot is October 20. You can request your absentee ballot in person, download a mailable form from the Clerk's website, or apply online at NMVote.org.

Absentee ballots can be dropped off at any scheduled polling place during voting hours or at the County Clerk's office. In addition, Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes will be located at Mesa Public Library and the White Rock Branch Library. Absentee ballots must be received at the Clerk's office by 7 pm November 3.

Early Voting in Person

Tuesday, October 6, thru Friday, October 16 (closed Indigenous People's Day, Monday Oct. 12): Monday thru Friday 8 am to 5 pm.

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

Early Voting in Person Continues

Saturday, Oct. 17 thru Saturday, Oct. 31:

Monday thru Saturday from 8 am to 6 pm

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

White Rock Town Hall – Training Rooms

Monday, November 2 - Voting is CLOSED

Election Day, Tuesday, November 3. Vote Centers open 7 am to 7 pm.

Registered voters of Los Alamos County may vote at any of the following Vote Centers on Election Day:

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

White Rock Town Hall – Conference Training Rooms

Golf Course Community Building – Multi-Purpose Room

University of New Mexico-Los Alamos – Building 2, Room 230

The usual polling place at the Betty Ehart Senior Center is currently unavailable.

Voting Information

When voting at the Vote Center, you will be asked for your name, address as registered, and year of birth. If you cannot provide this information orally, or if you registered by mail, you will be asked for an acceptable form of identification. Otherwise, no physical voter identification is required at the poll.

Sample ballots will be available at the County Clerk's office, at the County Libraries, and online at www.losalamosnm.us/clerk or www.NMVote.org.

Since electioneering within 100 feet of polling places is prohibited, and since displaying buttons, t-shirts, hats, or other such items is considered electioneering, voters are reminded not to display these items when voting at any polling place.

Information Online

The LWVLA General Election Voter Guide 2026 is available at www.lwvlosalamos.org. You can also visit the website VOTE411.org for an interactive look at your ballot and all the candidates' responses. Local voting information is available on the Los Alamos County Clerk's website at www.losalamosnm.us/clerk.

Candidate Questionnaires

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos sent questionnaires to all Los Alamos candidates for the 2026 General Election, and all candidates are reported here.

Because of space restrictions, the League advised the candidates that the length of the responses would be limited. The responses of candidates are printed as received by the League other than possibly being truncated at the maximum permitted length or removing excess white spaces. We have in no way edited for meaning, grammar, or spelling. The League assumes no responsibility for the content of any candidate's reply.

In this Voter Guide, candidates are listed in ballot order. Candidate order within each office was determined by a public alphabet randomization.

Thanks

We would like to thank the League of Women Voters of New Mexico Voter Guide Editor Edwina Jaramillo and assistant Mark Coomes. The editor of the Los Alamos Voter Guide is Cynthia Biddlecomb, with the help of Lynn Jones, Susannah Rousculp, Marianne Wilkerson, and Akkana Peck. Jean Dewart and her "Questions Committee" were essential. Thank you also to the United States League of Women Voters for the support of our on-line Voter Guide at VOTE411.org.

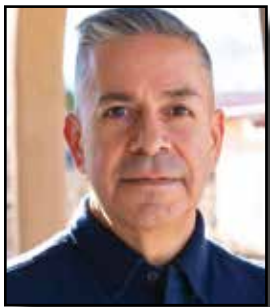
The Los Alamos County Clerk's office and the Secretary of State's office provided necessary and helpful information.

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Candidate Questions And Answers

United States Senator

New Mexico has two Senators in the United States Senate. U.S. Senators introduce and vote on proposed laws, serve on legislative committees, and participate in hearings, floor debates, fact-finding and investigations. They also must approve or reject many Presidential appointments, Cabinet members, federal judges and U.S. ambassadors. Senators also may assist constituents with issues and problems constituents have with federal agencies. The Senate also has the sole power to try impeachments charges against non-military federal officers. Term: Six years; no term limits.



Ben R. Luján

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I dedicated my career to improving the lives of those in New Mexico, whether fighting to create good-paying jobs for hardworking New Mexican men and women, increasing access to quality, affordable health care, and protecting New Mexico's natural resources. I've proudly represented New Mexico in the U.S. Senate since 2021, where I've worked every day to lower

costs, strengthen public safety, protect food assistance and affordable health care, expand broadband, and invest in New Mexico's future. Prior to the U.S. Senate, I was proud to serve as a member of the House of Representatives for over 10 years, including as chair of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and as the Assistant Speaker of the House.

2. How would you address your highest priorities?

Across our state, families are feeling the squeeze as the cost of everyday necessities continues to rise. Reckless tariffs are driving up prices and making it harder for hardworking New Mexicans to put food on the table. I will be a relentless advocate for policies that bring down costs and put families first. I also remain steadfast in the fight to ensure that every New Mexican has access to high-quality, affordable health care. And I will continue working to grow our local economy by supporting the diverse industries that create jobs across the state and investing in infrastructure that improves our roads and delivers reliable broadband.

3. What measures do you propose to sustain the Social Security Trust Fund?

New Mexicans spend their lives paying into Social Security, and they deserve to know that the program will be there to support them upon retirement. As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, I know Social Security benefits are a vital lifeline for retirees and people with disabilities. Social Security must be protected from cuts and Republican-led efforts to reduce benefits. I was proud to support the Social Security Fairness Act and see it enacted into law. This bill repeals the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), which currently reduce benefits for certain recipients. I'm also proud to support the Social Security 2100 Act, which eliminates the Social Security tax cap.

4. What changes to immigration laws, if any, would you recommend or support?

The United States has not significantly updated its immigration laws since the 1980s, which is why I have long championed comprehensive immigration

reform to address our broken immigration system and create an earned pathway for legal immigration. I support legislation like the DREAM Act to provide a legal pathway for Dreamers, the SECURE Act, which provides qualified Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) recipients a path to legal permanent residency, and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act to reform and modernize our temporary agricultural worker visa program. I am also a proponent of modern and effective border security that uses technology rather than walls to keep out narcotics and the cartels.

5. What actions, if any, would you take to address water and air quality issues facing the United States?

Growing up on a small family farm in New Mexico, I learned early that water is life. That is why I believe we must ensure our federal laws respect our ways of life and treat water as the life-giving resource it is. As a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee, I introduced legislation like the ACEQUIAS Act to ensure farmers and ranchers qualify for drought disaster assistance, and legislation to guarantee greater federal respect for our traditional land grants and acequias. I also believe we have a duty to support responsible, clean energy policies that protect our environment, improve our air quality, and encourage innovation. I'll continue to ensure that New Mexico is a leader in the clean energy economy, benefiting our families.

6. What, if anything, should Congress do to ensure quality healthcare at an affordable cost?

Health care is a human right, not a privilege for the few. The Affordable Care Act that voted for in 2009 made critical reforms that expanded New Mexicans access to care. I continue to fight against the attempts to rip health care away by repealing the ACA and gutting Medicaid. I am also a co-sponsor of Medicare for All because every single person deserves high-quality health care when they need it, no matter how much money they make. Access to health care means being able to afford it, which is why I voted to allow Medicare to negotiate drug prices so seniors and American taxpayers stop being overcharged.



Larry E Marker

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

Self-employed most of my adult life in multiple industries that include Oil and Gas, agriculture both farming and ranching, construction and some manufacturing. Most of my business ventures required significant knowledge in finance, employee relations and regulatory compliance. I have an extensive knowledge of constitutional law both state and federal. Multiple

years of experience in civil and regulatory matters.

2. How would you address your highest priorities?

My highest priorities going into the US Senate will be social security solvency reducing the federal debt and deficit. Reduction in the size of the government and its regulatory stranglehold on business and citizens.

3. What measures do you propose to sustain the Social Security Trust Fund?

We can address this issue with earnings from a windfall sovereign wealth fund. I have a plan to supplement the revenue paid into social security that supplemental income is structured to help offset the imbalance we currently have.

This will be a permanent solution that properly administered will prevent the reduction of benefits we are facing in 2032. The goal of this plan is to provide a permanent solution to this issue.

4. What changes to immigration laws, if any, would you recommend or support?

My first priority is to remove from the immigration system political advantage for either party. My position on this matter is best communicated with what I would consider as my goals. Provide to the American people an immigration system that brings into our communities the best and brightest from all over the world. Immigrants that will assimilate into the American culture and way of life whose dreams and aspirations when fulfilled benefit not just them but all Americans. Any policy that takes us toward that goal is a policy I will support. That would include temporary visas.

5. What actions, if any, would you take to address water and air quality issues facing the United States?

First, we establish non-political, science-based standards then establish practical and sensible goals and or benchmarks moving forward with a plan that provides a standard future generations can maintain.

6. What, if anything, should Congress do to ensure quality healthcare at an affordable cost?

Remove political advantage for either side from healthcare. Find a goal, set the goal then go to work. Bumper sticker slogans and press clips will not solve this issue. Healthcare is too important to use as a political pawn.

United States Representative District 3

This person represents one of New Mexico's three districts in the United States House of Representatives. U.S. Representatives introduce and vote on proposed laws and serve on legislative committees. Representatives also participate in hearings, floor debates, fact-finding and investigations. They also may help constituents with issues and problems constituents have with federal agencies. Term: Two years; no limits. District 3 includes Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and most of the northern part of the state.



Teresa Leger Fernández

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

As a daughter of rural New Mexico, I take our diverse voices to the halls of Congress. Even before serving, I built businesses & won legal battles for voting rights, tribal sovereignty & health care. As your Congresswoman, I've delivered huge bipartisan wins: \$100,000 for each eligible downwinder, uranium miner, or their survivors; over a \$1 billion in water funding for

acequias, farmers and the Eastern counties & Navajo/ Gallup pipelines; and \$5.45 billion for the HPCC fire victims. I'm protecting public lands & water at Chaco Canyon & in the Pecos Watershed. As Chair of the Democratic Women's Caucus & on the powerful Rules Committee, I've fought Trump on health care cuts, tariffs, war & the attack on our sense of shared humanity.

2. How would you address your highest priorities?

My work always begins by listening to your stories of injustice and tragedy; pain and possibility. The powerful stories of New Mexicans is how I won bipartisan support for the most important laws and funding I've brought home. As a cancer survivor and sister of brothers lost to overdose, I share my own experi-

ences about improving health care and addressing mental health and addiction. We must lower what it costs to live and this means taking on the corporate billionaires who gut worker pay and benefits. We must reverse the Republican tax breaks for billionaires so we can pay for what regular folks need. I will expand my Home of Your Own Act pilot project because a house you can afford is where you start building your American dream.

3. What measures do you propose to sustain the Social Security Trust Fund?

I believe Social Security is a sacred trust and the foundation of retirement security for our families and those disabled. To sustain it, I am a cosponsor of Social Security 2100: A Sacred Trust Act, which would make the wealthy pay social security tax on their income above \$400,000. This fair share tax will allow us to increase benefits and provide solvency to the Fund into the next century. I oppose Republican proposals to reduce guaranteed benefits, raise the retirement age, or replace Social Security with risky individual investment accounts. I've opposed Trump's cuts to staff at Social Security and the DOGE release of your private social security data. I will fight to keep Social Security strong - a Democratic legacy of the New Deal.

4. What changes to immigration laws, if any, would you recommend or support?

We must fix our broken immigration system with a balanced, humane approach. I support a roadmap to citizenship for those who work hard and play by the rules, including Dreamers and farmworkers. We must provide visas and recognize the important role immigrants play in our health and care economy and other key industries in New Mexico. Simultaneously, I support cost-effective border security using advanced technology and funding for border patrol to detect cartel activity and illegal drugs like fentanyl. I've opposed the cruelty and brutality of the ICE and CBP raids, the arrests and killing of citizens and the mistreatment of people in detention centers, especially pregnant women and children. I oppose family separation.

5. What actions, if any, would you take to address water and air quality issues facing the United States?

Environmental health is non-negotiable for our survival & our economy. Keeping our fragile landscape healthy feeds our sense of awe & wonder in these beautiful lands. I delivered over \$1 billion to keep clean water flowing in New Mexico & am sponsoring 7 water settlement bills. I funded cleaning up abandoned oil & gas wells & the contamination plumes at LANL & Canon. The clean up also creates good paying union jobs & supports businesses. I've funded renewable energy projects that, sadly, Trump gutted, but Democrats will bring back because it's the cheapest electricity at a time when everything costs so much. Doing good by our planet also helps our pocketbook. I will reinstate & improve the clean air & water programs Trump destroyed.

6. What, if anything, should Congress do to ensure quality healthcare at an affordable cost?

Healthcare is a basic human right, but big insurers and private equity profits means we pay more, wait more and get less health care here. I understand the urgency of making care affordable and accessible everywhere, especially in rural areas. Congress must: Lower Drug Costs. We must build on the Inflation Reduction Act to negotiate lower drug prices for everyone and cap out-of-pocket costs. Expand and Improve Medicare. Moving toward a single-payer system like Medicare for All will save money and expand benefits to include dental, vision, and hearing coverage. Protect Access. We must codify reproductive rights through the Women's Health Protection Act and defend the Affordable Care Act & Medicaid against Republican bills to eliminate them.

Martin Zamora

(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Governor

In New Mexico's General Election the Governor is elected with the Lieutenant Governor of the same party. The Governor holds the supreme executive power of the state and sees that the state's laws are faithfully executed. Responsibilities include preparing the state budget and submitting it to the legislature and overseeing the overall planning for key areas of state government; these areas include economic development, education, human and natural resources, energy and emergency planning. The Governor also appoints people to fill vacancies in a variety of both state and federal offices. Term: Four years, limited to two consecutive terms.

**Gregory D Hull**

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I have been a New Mexico resident for more than 40 years, an entrepreneur, and Rio Rancho's longest-serving mayor, elected three times beginning in 2014. Before entering public service, I built and operated two businesses, gaining direct experience with job creation and regulatory challenges. As mayor, I doubled the police budget, helped Rio Rancho earn recognition as

New Mexico's safest city, and attracted more than \$6 billion in investment. In 2024, Rio Rancho was named a Best Place to Live for Families and the state's most affordable city. I am ready to bring that same record of results to all New Mexicans.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will achieve them.

My top priorities are public safety, economic growth, education, infrastructure and water security, and protecting children. I will increase police presence and enhance border security to address crime and the fentanyl crisis. I will attract high-paying jobs through targeted business incentives and energy expansion. I will hold schools accountable for outcomes while expanding career training. I will invest in brackish water treatment and aquifer recharge for long-term supply. And I will reform CYFD with clear standards, oversight, and stable caseworker staffing.

3. What measures would you propose to improve Pre-K - 12 education?

New Mexico's reading and math scores rank among the nation's lowest, yet the state has responded by lowering standards rather than raising them. I will reverse that trend by tying a portion of school funding to measurable gains in literacy, math, and graduation rates. I will expand career and technical education so students graduate with industry-recognized skills, establish accessible tutoring programs, and give parents transparent access to curriculum and progress data. I will also address chronic absenteeism and reform the Public Education Department to focus on results.

4. How would you address future water needs in an increasingly arid state?

Water security is not optional — it is the foundation of economic growth, agriculture, and stable communities. Rio Rancho led the state with the state's first-ever aquifer recharge system. As governor, I will invest in brackish water treatment to create new sources of supply, reducing pressure on rivers and freshwater aquifers. I will upgrade aging infrastructure to cut leaks, expand advanced wastewater treatment for safe reuse, and support modern irrigation systems to

protect farmers' livelihoods. I will meet our interstate obligations to deliver water downstream and pursue transparent negotiations to resolve outstanding Tribal water rights. Long-term certainty for every water user starts with planning ahead and acting now.

5. What criteria should be applied when considering proposed large economic development projects?

Projects should be evaluated on the quality and wages of jobs created, their alignment with New Mexico's existing strengths — research, advanced manufacturing, energy, and defense — and whether they support workforce development. Incentives must be tied to measurable results and fiscal accountability. Projects should benefit both rural and urban communities, avoid placing undue burdens on infrastructure or public services, and strengthen long-term economic resilience. My core question: does this investment leave New Mexico more diversified, more self-sufficient, and better positioned to grow?

**Deb Haaland**

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I will bring lived experience and a proven record of results to the Governor's office. I am a 35th-generation New Mexican, educated in our public schools, and a first-generation college graduate. I'm also a single mom who owned a small business and understands what it means to rely on Medicaid, SNAP, and WIC to keep a family afloat. I was a member of Congress and

the Secretary of the Interior, where I managed an \$18 billion budget and 70,000 employees. In both positions, I worked across the aisle to deliver infrastructure and broadband investments, protect public lands, launch the Missing and Murdered Unit, advance major clean energy projects, and lead historic pollution cleanup. I know how to make the government work for working people

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will achieve them.

New Mexicans deserve to be able to afford groceries and rent in the same month, feel safe in their communities, see a doctor when they are sick, and for kids to have a quality public education. To put more money in people's pockets, I will raise wages, expand tax relief for working families, pursue paid family and medical leave, aggressively build and grow affordable housing, and support job creation. To ensure our kids are able to read by third grade, I will prioritize literacy outcomes and expand investment in universal childcare, community schools, and educator recruitment. Finally on public safety and healthcare, I will tackle violent crime, drugs, and gun violence, while overhauling CYFD and expanding behavioral health service.

3. What measures would you propose to improve Pre-K - 12 education?

My goal is for every step of a child's education to open doors. My top priority is helping kids read by third grade, because reading sets them up to succeed in every subject. I will invest in literacy support, coaches, summer learning, math screening and intervention, and stronger instruction. I will protect and expand universal childcare with quality childcare options, and make early education easier to access. To support kids who might not want to go to college, I will bring the trades into middle school and more high schools. For educators, I plan to expand teacher residencies, improve pay and benefits, help with housing in rural communities, and expand community schools plus Native language and culture programs for Tribal students.

4. How would you address future water needs in an increasingly arid state?

I will always protect New Mexico's water, air, and land. Water is precious—I

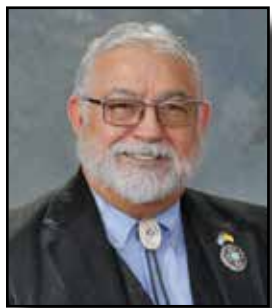
carried it as a child from the community spigot to my grandmother's house. Our water future must be built on conservation, infrastructure, accountability, and partnership. I will help Tribal nations, rural towns, acequia communities, and colonias repair aging systems, reduce leaks, and grow the workforce needed to keep water flowing. I will strengthen the Water Trust Board, prioritize communities with unsafe drinking water, hold polluters accountable, and require high-water-use industries to conserve so economic growth does not come at the expense of our limited water supply.

5. What criteria should be applied when considering proposed large economic development projects?

New developments must be mutually beneficial, creating good-paying jobs for New Mexicans using local labor while protecting families from cost increases. Projects must prioritize community well-being, utilizing transparency, community benefit agreements, accountability, and clawback provisions to ensure promises are kept. Investment must safeguard water, air, land, and public health, require accurate water reporting, and ensure industries support clean energy and grid stability. I aim for New Mexico to lead in energy, tech, film, and outdoor recreation with long-term value for our communities, preventing exploitation by outside corporations seeking short-term gains.

Lieutenant Governor

In New Mexico's General Election the Lieutenant Governor is elected with the Governor of the same party. The Lieutenant Governor is the president of the New Mexico Senate (and can vote on a Senate issue in the event of a tie) and is the acting governor when the Governor is out of the state. The Lieutenant Governor also assists New Mexicans in their dealings with state agencies and refers complaints or special problems of New Mexicans to the proper agency. The Lieutenant Governor sits on several state boards and commissions, and performs any other duties assigned by the Governor. Term: Four years, limited to two consecutive terms.



David M Gallegos

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

The Lt. Governor's primary constitutional role is presiding over the State Senate, and I've spent 14 years serving in that body. I already know the rules, the relationships, the pressure points, and the personalities. I know the difference between a bill that moves and one that dies in committee, and why. Beyond the Legislature, I bring 30 years with Gas Company of New Mexico and 16 years with Ramirez and Sons

Construction--real-world experience in the industries the Senate's work directly affects. As a rural Hispanic 14th generation New Mexican, I bring a perspective that reflects communities too often unheard in Santa Fe.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will you achieve them.

Accountability: New Mexico has a spending problem masquerading as a revenue problem. I'll push for rigorous auditing of waste, fraud, and abuse--and make findings public. Public safety: I'll advance sentencing reform, oppose catch-and-release policies, and ensure officers have the resources and legal protections they need. Education: I'll champion accountability-based reform, value-added assessment, and expanded school choice for every family regardless of zip code. Affordability: I'll fight for policies that let small businesses breathe, grow our energy sector responsibly, and reduce the regulatory burden

crushing working families.

3. How can you help the Senate operate more effectively and efficiently?

Presiding over the Senate is a leadership role, and I intend to treat it that way. Fourteen years in the Legislature means I understand the procedural rules, have relationships throughout the chamber, and know how to move a body through its work without sacrificing deliberation. I will preside with fairness and consistency, apply the rules evenly regardless of party or personality, and ensure every member--majority and minority alike--has a full and fair opportunity to be heard. A Senate built on procedural integrity gets more done. That is the standard I will hold.

4. How will you facilitate communication and ensure transparency between government agencies and constituents?

Transparency is a structural commitment. I'll use the Lt. Governor's office as an active conduit between state agencies and the New Mexicans they serve, particularly rural communities that feel like an afterthought in Santa Fe. That means statewide outreach every year, not just election years. It means pushing agencies to communicate plainly and responsively. And it means publicly naming failures when agencies aren't meeting expectations, because sunlight is the most powerful accountability tool we have.



Stephanie Garcia Richard

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I was a public school teacher for 19 years, a three-term State Representative, and Chair of the House Education Committee. As Commissioner of Public Lands for the last eight years, I've generated record-breaking revenue -- over \$16 billion for our public schools -- while holding oil and gas accountable. I also expanded renewable energy projects sevenfold, launched affordable housing initiatives,

and reformed agency accountability to plug hundreds of abandoned wells. When Donald Trump attacks New Mexico, I know how to fight back--because I already have, creating protections for New Mexico's precious and historical places, including Mount Taylor and Chaco Canyon.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will you achieve them.

Deb Haaland and I will lower the cost of living, expand access to affordable health-care, stop price gouging, make our communities safer, protect our environment and water, and improve public education so our kids read at or above grade level. As Lt. Governor, I will move that agenda through the legislature and hold agencies accountable for delivering it.

3. How can you help the Senate operate more effectively and efficiently?

I know the legislative process from the inside and out, having served three terms in the House and chaired the House Education Committee. As Lt. Governor, I will make sure the Senate operates with transparency and consistent application of its rules so the public understands what is happening every step of the way. With short, 30- and 60-day sessions, it will be my job to keep the Senate moving efficiently so we can address New Mexico's most pressing challenges.

4. How will you facilitate communication and ensure transparency between government agencies and constituents?

State government has to go to where New Mexicans actually live, rather than waiting for residents to come to Santa Fe. As Land Commissioner, I broke down agency silos and brought the Land Commissioner's office to every part of New Mexico to meet directly with communities, ranchers, educators, and tribal nations, ensuring that policy wasn't built in a vacuum. I'll continue that practice as Lt. Governor by bringing the Roundhouse to local communities and hearing directly from New Mexicans about the challenges they face where they live.

Secretary of State

As New Mexico's chief elections officer, the Secretary of State oversees the entire election process and regulates lobbyist activity and reporting of campaign finances. The Secretary of State also maintains official records about business entities as required by state law. Term: Four years limited to two consecutive terms.



Amanda López Askin

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

As a public servant for 25 years, I bring extensive experience in both government and corporate organizations. I am in my eighth year serving as Doña Ana County Clerk, where I have administered 12 elections in New Mexico's second most populous county. My experience gives me firsthand knowledge of what it takes to conduct accurate, secure, and accessible elections. I have worked directly within the systems that make our democracy function and understand the challenges election officials and workers face. I am prepared to bring that experience, commitment, and knowledge to the Office of Secretary of State and continue strengthening public trust, transparency, and access for voters across New Mexico.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will achieve them.

My top priorities are protecting voting rights, modernizing election administration, and restoring trust through transparency. I will work to expand voter access by improving voter education, strengthening language access, supporting county clerks, and making election information easier to understand and access. I will also focus on protecting election systems and voter data through strong cybersecurity practices, regular training, and close coordination with local election officials. Just as important, I will make the office more responsive and transparent so voters, candidates, and administrators can get clear answers and timely support.

3. What actions, if any, would you take to increase and protect voter participation in elections?

I would take every lawful action available to increase and protect voter participation. That includes improving public education around registration, absentee voting, early voting, and new election laws; expanding outreach to historically underrepresented communities; and working to remove barriers that discourage participation. I also believe voters should be able to cast a ballot free from fear and intimidation. That is why I supported SB 264 to prevent ICE presence at voting locations. Protecting voter participation means protecting access, dignity, and confidence in the process. I am the only candidate in this race who supported this bill.

4. How would you help the public navigate election information in this era of AI and social media?

The Secretary of State's office must become a trusted, easy-to-find source of accurate information. In an era of AI, misinformation, and viral falsehoods, the public needs timely facts in plain language. I would prioritize rapid-response voter education, consistent myth-versus-fact messaging, multilingual outreach, and strong partnerships with county clerks, community organizations, and media outlets. The office should meet voters where they are while also making sure official information is easy to verify. We cannot allow confusion and disinformation to discourage participation or undermine trust.

5. What is the Secretary of State's role in safeguarding the integrity of vot-

er information and ensuring safe and fair elections?

The Secretary of State has a central responsibility to protect voter information, support secure election administration, and uphold fair access to the ballot. That means maintaining strong standards for cybersecurity, data privacy, training, and election procedures while working closely with county clerks and election staff across the state. It also means ensuring that elections are both secure and accessible because those values are not in conflict. A safe and fair election is one where voters know their information is protected, the rules are applied equally, and every lawful vote is counted accurately.

6. Should the Secretary of State be a partisan or nonpartisan position, and why?

The work of the Secretary of State should be carried out in a strictly nonpartisan way, no matter how the office appears on the ballot. I do think the Secretary of State's position should include party affiliation as voters want to know what party you're affiliated with and what platform your worldview and belief system is. Voters want to know and will ask and the most transparent thing to do is to include the party affiliation. The responsibility of this office is not to serve a party, it is to serve the public, protect democracy, and administer the law fairly. Voters deserve to know that election decisions are being made based on facts, law, and fairness, not politics. Public trust depends on that.



Ramona L Goolsby

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I am a U.S. Army Reserve veteran, retired family nurse practitioner (including VA service), longtime small-business owner, retired rancher, and elected Ciudad Soil & Water Conservation District supervisor. Running a business and completing complex missions taught me precision, accountability, and efficient systems management. I have served as a poll clerk and

sponsored transparency referendums. The Secretary of State role is administrative: managing elections, business entity records, and fair statute enforcement for all New Mexicans. I bring practical, results-focused leadership.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will achieve them.

Priorities: election integrity and public confidence; accurate, user-friendly business filings; transparent, fair enforcement of campaign finance and lobbying laws; professional office operations. I will maintain accurate voter rolls, support common-sense safeguards, modernize business registration to reduce red tape, apply statutes evenly without favoritism, provide clear public information, and work consistently with county clerks so every eligible vote counts and New Mexico businesses operate efficiently.

3. What actions, if any, would you take to increase and protect voter participation in elections?

Participation grows when eligible citizens trust the system is fair and accurate. I will protect access through accurate voter rolls (removing outdated registrations while safeguarding lawful voters), clear education on options, efficient processes with county clerks, and neutral administration as a fair referee. Restoring trust via transparency and consistent rules encourages more eligible New Mexicans to participate while protecting integrity.

4. How would you help the public navigate election information in this era of AI and social media?

The office must be the neutral, authoritative source of clear facts. I will prioritize plain-language resources explaining registration, voting methods, deadlines, and results; provide rapid transparent responses to questions and circulating

claims. A transparency portal for election records accessible by the public will be top priority. Partnering with county clerks and using secure channels helps voters obtain reliable information directly from the elections administrator.

5. What is the Secretary of State's role in safeguarding the integrity of voter information and ensuring safe and fair elections?

As chief elections officer, the Secretary helps administer elections, maintains official records including voter data, supports county clerks, enforces statutes, and ensures consistent transparent procedures. Integrity requires accurate voter rolls, protected data, secure systems, clear public information, and neutral refereeing so every eligible voter can participate and every legal vote is counted accurately. The role is administrative: apply the law evenly and build confidence through competence.

6. Should the Secretary of State be a partisan or nonpartisan position, and why?

The office must be administered in a nonpartisan manner regardless of the officeholder's party. Elections and records require neutral management so every eligible New Mexican trusts that rules are applied fairly and consistently. Core duties- running elections, maintaining voter and business records, and enforcing disclosure- are strictly administrative, not advocacy. A professional, rule-based approach focused on accuracy, transparency, and equal treatment best serves the public and protects process integrity.

Attorney General

New Mexico's Attorney General heads New Mexico's Department of Justice, which represents the interests of the state, state officers, state employees and New Mexico's residents in a wide variety of courts and types of civil and criminal cases. The Attorney General issues opinions on questions of law from other state agencies or officials, and drafts contracts, bonds and other instruments for state agencies. The Attorney General also has primary authority for enforcement of consumer protection and antitrust laws, prosecution of criminal appeals and some complex white-collar crimes, training and certification of peace officers, and most natural resource and environmental matters. Term: Four years limited to two consecutive terms.



Raúl Torrez

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I've served as New Mexico's Attorney General, an assistant District Attorney, assistant Attorney General, assistant US Attorney, and as a White House Fellow and senior advisor in President Obama's Department of Justice and have spent my career fighting to protect families. I have also served as District Attorney, managing the largest law office in the state, where we

used smart-on-crime approach to solve decades-old rape cases. I've taken on extreme, right wing militias and big corporations like Facebook, and I know how to fight and advocate for the policies we need to make our communities safer. I will continue to fight to strengthen our criminal justice system, fight for consumers, safeguard the environment, take on corruption.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will achieve them.

As Attorney General, I have used my nearly two decades of experience as a prosecutor to strengthen our criminal justice system by implementing common sense policies to keep violent, repeat offenders off our streets. Additionally, the office has aggressively fought for consumers and workers, safeguarded the envi-

ronment, took on corruption and special interests, and protected our democracy and women's rights.

3. How would you protect the rights of New Mexicans?

I've protected the rights of New Mexicans by taking direct legal action when people are harmed. I've sued Meta Platforms to address the exploitation of children online. I have also challenged federal action; joining litigation against changes to asylum and immigration policies, birthright citizenship and opposing federal restrictions that threaten access to health care and essential resources for our communities. I've enforce consumer protection laws to hold companies accountable for fraud and abuse. Protecting rights means using the law aggressively to defend safety, dignity, and justice for every New Mexican.

4. What actions would you support to make citizens safer?

As a prosecutor, I prioritize public safety, I launched a statewide Crime Gun Intelligence Center and have always focused on curbing repeat violent offenders, combat organized retail crime, fentanyl trafficking, and gun violence. As the former Bernalillo County District Attorney, I have been a national leader for innovative "smart on crime" policies. I was sworn in during a crime crisis and brought new ideas, and energy to the office, while working across the political spectrum to help protect New Mexico families and businesses.

5. How would you protect states' rights as guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution?

I protect states' rights by enforcing the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and pushing back when federal decisions harm New Mexico's authority. I have joined multi-state litigation opposing Donald Trump's executive actions on elections that threatened to interfere with how states administer their own voting systems, as well as efforts to undermine birthright citizenship guaranteed under the Constitution. I have also worked with other states to challenge federal overreach in environmental and administrative rule-making. Protecting states' rights means ensuring New Mexico retains the power to make its own decisions and is not sidelined by unlawful federal action.



Samuel Isaiah Kane, Sr

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I know how the law works, and I know why it's not working for the people of New Mexico. Throughout my career, I have tirelessly advocated for the legal rights of my clients. I have seen first-hand how the justice system places politics over people. The office of Attorney General was created by the legislature to represent and protect the people's interests. But that's not happening.

Our state has some of the poorest nationwide rankings when it comes to the most basic aspects of safety and security. Helping families, protecting communities, and preserving our resources matter more than grabbing headlines. New Mexico needs an Attorney General that will advocate for the people on things that matter most. I am qualified because that's all I do.

2. List your top priorities, and explain how you will achieve them.

While my platform includes many priorities and proposed solutions, there is no greater priority than community safety. I will first work to ensure that criminals who are taken off the streets stay off the streets. Our law enforcement officers work too hard only to have some criminal courts fail to effectively prosecute or sentence the offender. I will ensure that the courts no longer act as a revolving door for those who threaten our safety. And as the courts work harder to process and house criminals, our law enforcement can better direct their resources towards combating the specific crimes causing the most harm to our communities such as the influx of drugs. Protecting the people from harm, by whatever means, is my top priority.

3. How would you protect the rights of New Mexicans?

As the “chief legal officer,” the Attorney General has substantial power to protect the rights and interests of the people. In a very real sense, the AG is “the people’s lawyer,” but with the added ability to enforce the law for the people’s protection. When we talk about “the rights of New Mexicans,” we’re really talking about the rights we value most as a community. Safety, security, access to public resources, environmental preservation, constitutional freedoms—these are examples of the rights we value most because without access to these, we lose access to the rest. I will protect all the rights of New Mexicans by first fighting for and defending the rights that matter most—through whatever powers are available to my office.

4. What actions would you support to make citizens safer?

There is no excuse why New Mexico ranks at the very top of almost all national rankings when it comes to crime. Our crime rate is a product of decades of governmental neglect and meaningful change will take time. But when we prioritize success, we achieve success. First, we attack crime from the top down. Our law enforcement is already working hard to catch criminals, but the courts aren’t prosecuting. This will change. At the same time, we will work with communities and schools to create and implement comprehensive programs to identify and work with at-risk youth to take them off the streets before the police do. My office will fight anyone who seeks to harm our communities, from drug dealers to the government itself.

5. How would you protect states’ rights as guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution?

The Attorney General is sworn to uphold and defend the law and protect the interests of the people. It is a privilege of that office to represent the people in court when the federal government tries to overstep its power and infringe upon rights guaranteed us by the U.S. Constitution. When the interests of the people demand, and should our guaranteed rights be threatened, I will not hesitate to hold the federal government to account. I will also defend our own State’s legislation against federal government attack in defense of our citizens’ guaranteed rights. While I cannot rewrite the laws, I can, and will, prosecute and defend them with the full force of the New Mexico department of justice.

State Auditor

The State Auditor heads an office that ensures the financial affairs of every state and local governmental entity are thoroughly examined and competently audited each year. The State Auditor also ensures the comprehensive annual financial report for the state is thoroughly examined and audited each year. Term: Four years limited to two consecutive terms.

Joshua James Ryan Lawrence

(Republican)
NO RESPONSE RECEIVED



Joseph M Maestas

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

As the current State Auditor, I hold public entities and officials accountable for managing taxpayer funds and protecting taxpayer money from fraud, waste, and abuse. For example, my office has ensured that opioid settlement funds are being used properly and protected funding intended for mitigating natural disasters. Our office assisted small

local public bodies like our acequias to become financially compliant and

unlocked nearly \$15 million in withheld capital outlay. I’ve spent my life in public service, both in Federal civil service and in elected public service. I served as Chairman of the Public Regulation Commission, Mayor of Espanola and city councilor in both Espanola and Santa Fe. I’m also a licensed professional engineer.

2. What is your highest responsibility as State Auditor?

The New Mexico Office of the State Auditor (OSA) is a constitutionally established executive office independent and accountable only to the people of New Mexico. The OSA has two primary statutory (Audit Act) purposes: (1) to ensure that the financial affairs of every agency shall be thoroughly examined and audited each year and (2) require the financial affairs and transactions of an agency to be audited in whole or in part. These purposes grant the State Auditor the authority to conduct both annual financial and special audits. The OSA is the State financial watchdog that protects taxpayer money from fraud, waste, and abuse. It also helps to hold court-appointed conservators accountable for managing financial assets of protected persons.

3. What actions can you take when audits are not submitted in a timely manner?

When public entity audit reports are submitted late, the public entity does receive a formal audit finding for a late report. I use my professional judgment to determine the underlying causes of the late report and determine the best course of action to address the issues. This includes referring the entity to other agencies for additional actions and informing policy makers. When audit reports are chronically late, the OSA can step in as the auditor of last resort and directly assist the troubled entity to become financially compliant as was done for Mesalands Community College through annual and special audits.

4. What are the top three issues you will investigate as State Auditor?

The top three issues that we will investigate and/or examine: 1) Incoming, anonymous, and credible fraud, waste, and abuse complaints. We currently have over 300 active cases; 2) High-risk public entities that are chronically late in audit report submittals and have a severe lack of internal controls, resulting in adverse and repeat findings; and 3) In partnership with the District Court system, we also investigate conservatorships, based on a risk screening of annual financial reports. These conservatorships manage the financial assets of our most vulnerable.

State Treasurer

The State Treasurer heads an office with a wide range of financial responsibilities, including acting as the central bank for state agencies, managing the investment of many state funds, and issuing state bonds. The Treasurer also provides a detailed statement of the condition of the state treasury to the New Mexico Legislature. Term: Four years limited to two consecutive terms.



James F Ellison

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I hold the Chartered Financial Analysts designation, which is the gold standard of investment credentials. It signifies a strong foundation in securities analysis and portfolio management, and a commitment to ethics and professionalism in the investment industry. This is not a job for a career politician — it’s one for someone with proven investment credentials.

2. What is your highest responsibility as State Treasurer?

The highest responsibility of the State Treasurer is to safeguard and to responsibly grow the public funds entrusted to the state treasury office. The State Treasurer directly manages the \$20 billion state treasury portfolio, and serves on 13 boards, councils, and commissions which oversee \$160 in state funds.

3. How would you address your top priorities?

I will advocate for putting unclaimed property administration with the State Treasury Office. The Taxation & Revenue Department is the wrong office, and it shows: we're holding \$390 million that belong to New Mexican families and businesses, and returning less than 5 cents on every dollar. As your Treasurer, I'll fix that. New Mexicans deserve to know how their money is performing. I will publish a clear, plain-English quarterly investment performance report on the Treasurer's website. Transparency isn't optional when managing \$20 billion of public funds. I will use my seat on the board of the State Investment Council, as well as on other boards, to advocate for the responsible stewardship of state funds — not for political agendas.

4. What criteria would you recommend for selecting financial institutions in which to invest state funds?

To be clear, the state treasurer's office directly manages the state treasury's \$20 billion portfolio. The question, then, is really what criteria I would recommend to other boards, such as the State Investment Council for selecting outside investment advisors. The SIC has a solid framework for selecting external advisors. There are some ways this can be improved, such as doing a better job of considering total costs rather than just headline management fees. However, the bigger question is whether the ESG (environmental, social, and governance) policies that it requires managers to adhere to is a drag on investment returns. I would advocate for an implementation of this policy that does not result in a drag on returns.

5. Explain your position on whether the Treasurer should recommend increasing investments in NM-based companies.

In the state treasury's \$20 billion portfolio, there simply is no statutory authority to invest directly in New Mexico-based private companies. These investments are limited to high-quality, liquid fixed-income securities. Investing in New Mexico municipal and state-issued bonds, however, is something that the Treasurer can and does do. The State Investment Council is where investing in New Mexico businesses can and does happen. There are statutory requirements for how much the SIC must invest in the NM Small Business Investment Corp. The key tension is that of fiduciary duty. I would advocate for in-state investment above and beyond what is required by statute only if these investments would not depress returns.



Laura M Montoya

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I am qualified to continue serving as State Treasurer because I bring more than two decades of direct experience in public finance, treasury operations, and government leadership — and because I am already successfully performing the responsibilities of this office. My career has been built around safeguarding public funds, strengthening financial systems,

and ensuring that New Mexicans can trust their government to manage their money responsibly. As State Treasurer, I oversee the state's investment portfolio, cash flow, banking services, and financial compliance functions. My

background uniquely prepared me for this work while also pushing financial fitness as a graduation requirement, baby bonds, and UNM/NMSU financial certification.

2. What is your highest responsibility as State Treasurer?

I swore an oath to be the state's fiduciary. A fiduciary must always act in the best interest of the funds. This is the highest ethical and legal obligation. My job is to provide safety, liquidity, and yield, in that order. I pride myself in being accessible to the people and my job is to serve New Mexicans to the best of my ability even when making tough decisions. In 2023, the portfolio I managed was \$14 billion. Today, it is \$24 billion. That is a significant increase in a very short period of time. The workload within STO has dramatically increased, and the team that I have built are doing an amazing job that New Mexican should be proud of and feel confident in. We provide not only banking but outreach that promotes financial education.

3. How would you address your top priorities?

I have been addressing them, and we are ready to continue the work with your support. We are building a strong team to achieve our goals. We are earning \$2 mil/day for the state and have the largest portfolio the state treasurer's office has ever had. We are holding the Trump administration accountable, especially when his orders negatively affect New Mexico. We are collaborating efforts with several partners to support financial fitness to open access to more opportunity, baby bonds to build generational wealth, and NM STABLE to assist our disability community. We are educating leaders on the resources needed to get the job done with best practices and internal controls as a priority.

4. What criteria would you recommend for selecting financial institutions in which to invest state funds?

If you are referring to working with banks to manage our cash deposits, we base the relationship on risk and compliance as well as their reporting, collateral requirements, and the rate they can provide. We are developing a new program that will allow me to work with our local banks at a lower rate, with the commitment that the local banks will do more to contribute to our communities in small business loans, mortgages, or small loans for community members. This is a great partnership with our local banks. We love our bank partners and what they do for our communities across New Mexico and how they support financial education.

5. Explain your position on whether the Treasurer should recommend increasing investments in NM-based companies.

My portfolio does not "invest in any companies." The State Treasurer's Office is the liquidity for the state and invests per 6-10-10 NMSA. I am on 13 boards, councils and commissions including the SIC, which is the second largest sovereign wealth fund in the country. We just updated our NM portfolio to make it more successful where we focus on rate of return and now encourage and hold fund managers accountable to work in or with NM when appropriate. There are a lot of amazing investments occurring in NM whether through SBIC, ED, Housing NM, NMFA, RETA, or our two pension funds, ERB and PERA. As important as it is to invest in New Mexico based companies, it is equally important to invest in our own young people, hence baby bonds.

Commissioner of Public Lands

The Commissioner of Public Lands heads the State Land Office, which oversees the use, including the collection of rent, on 9 million acres of land and 13 million acres of mineral rights. New Mexico holds these lands in trust to support public schools, universities, hospitals, charitable purposes, and penitentiaries. Term: Four years limited to two consecutive terms.



Michael Jack Perry

(Republican)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I've spent my career working on the ground in New Mexico, managing and stewarding the very lands this office oversees. I served over 20 years with the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish, rising to Major of Southern Field Operations, and later as Assistant Commissioner of State Lands, where I helped manage millions of acres of trust land. I also run a

wildlife and habitat consulting business, working directly with ranchers and landowners. I understand how land, water, and resources support our communities, and I bring practical, real-world experience, not theory to this job.

2. What are your top three priorities for the State Land Office (SLO)?

First, maximize revenue for our beneficiaries, especially public schools through responsible energy development and sound land management. Second, support working lands by improving communication with lessees, expanding responsible access, and protecting traditional uses like grazing, hunting, and firewood gathering. Third, strengthen stewardship by improving forest and watershed management to reduce wildfire risk, protect water resources, and ensure long-term sustainability of our trust lands.

3. What are the greatest challenges facing the SLO?

The biggest challenge is balancing increasing demand for revenue with responsible stewardship of the land. New Mexico relies heavily on trust land income to fund education, but we must also protect the long-term health of those lands. Other challenges include water scarcity, wildfire risk, access limitations, and ensuring fair and consistent policies across energy sectors. The SLO must also improve coordination with federal and local partners to better manage land, resources, and infrastructure.

4. How would you balance the oversight and protection of state trust lands with the need to generate revenue for the support of the beneficiaries (e.g., public schools, universities, etc.)?

The mission of the State Land Office is clear: generate revenue while protecting the long-term value of the land. Those goals are not in conflict when done right. Responsible energy development, well-managed grazing, and active land stewardship all contribute to both revenue and sustainability. I believe in a balanced, science-based approach that supports economic activity while ensuring proper reclamation, fair leasing practices, and long-term land health. If we manage the land well today, it will continue to provide for our schools and communities for generations.

5. What actions, if any, should the State Land Office take to facilitate the expansion of transmission infrastructure to allow further development of New Mexico's energy resources?

The State Land Office should play a proactive role by ensuring leasing and permitting processes for transmission corridors are clear, efficient, and consistent. Transmission is critical to fully develop both traditional and renewable energy resources in New Mexico. I support coordinated planning with industry, utilities, and regulators to identify strategic corridors that minimize land impacts while maximizing access to markets. At the same time, we must ensure fair compensation to trust beneficiaries and maintain strong environmental and reclamation standards.



Juan De Jesus Sanchez, III

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I'm a 13th-generation New Mexican who grew up working in a ranching family in Valencia and Socorro counties, where I learned firsthand the importance of land and water stewardship. Professionally, I've worked as a Natural Resource Specialist and Ranger with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and as a technical assistant for the New Mexico Acequia

Commission, supporting conservation and traditional water systems. I also served as Political Director for U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich, working on land, energy, and public policy. I bring lived experience, professional expertise, and a deep commitment to protecting our lands while delivering for our schools and communities.

2. What are your top three priorities for the State Land Office (SLO)?

Growing and diversifying revenue for public schools and institutions by expanding renewable energy, the outdoor economy, and long-term tools like conservation leases. While holding Oil and Gas; and all those who use our lands to the high standards. Protect and preserve our state trust lands for future generations. Increasing access to our lands, including expanding responsible recreation opportunities, while respecting cultural sites and traditional uses. We can generate revenue and protect what makes New Mexico special at the same time.

3. What are the greatest challenges facing the SLO?

The greatest challenge is balancing revenue generation with long-term stewardship. State trust lands fund our public schools and institutions, but they must also be protected for future generations. That balance is becoming more difficult as we face increasing pressure from climate change, prolonged drought, and water scarcity, alongside growing demand for development on public lands. The State Land Office must take a long-term approach that ensures responsible use today while sustaining the health, productivity, and cultural value of these lands for generations to come.

4. How would you balance the oversight and protection of state trust lands with the need to generate revenue for the support of the beneficiaries (e.g., public schools, universities, etc.)?

These goals go hand in hand. Responsible stewardship ensures our lands remain productive over the long term. I would prioritize diversified revenue streams, including renewable energy, conservation leasing, and recreation, alongside responsible traditional development. Strong oversight, clear standards, and accountability are key. By taking a long-term approach, we can protect our lands, respect cultural values, and generate stable funding for schools and other beneficiaries.

5. What actions, if any, should the State Land Office take to facilitate the expansion of transmission infrastructure to allow further development of New Mexico's energy resources?

The State Land Office should play a proactive role in facilitating responsible transmission development by leasing appropriate state lands and coordinating with federal, local, and tribal partners. Expanding transmission is critical to unlocking New Mexico's renewable energy potential and growing revenue for our schools. At the same time, projects must be carefully sited to avoid impacts to sensitive landscapes, wildlife, and cultural resources. We also need to focus on community benefit funds for these projects, so communities impacted are benefiting as well. Done right, transmission can strengthen our economy while protecting what makes our state unique.

State Representative District 43

State Representatives sit in the New Mexico House of Representatives, which is the lower house of New Mexico. Representatives introduce and vote on proposed laws, serve on legislative committees, and participate in hearings, floor debates, fact-finding and investigations. They also may assist constituents with issues and problems the constituents may have with government agencies within New Mexico. Term: Two years; no term limits. The 43rd District includes Los Alamos and parts of Sandoval and Santa Fe Counties



Christine Chandler

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

My experience in public service is broad. In addition to my service as District 43 Representative for nearly 8 years, I was elected as a Los Alamos County Councilor twice and also serviced as Los Alamos Probate Judge. I chaired the House Taxation & Revenue Committee prior to my current chairmanship of the House Judiciary Committee. I have an established a track record of carrying legislation that is well-researched, balanced and consistently focused

on advancing the interests of New Mexico working families. For example, I successfully led House efforts to enact meaningful medical malpractice reform and supported other legislation that will improve healthcare access.

2. How would you address your highest priorities?

To lay the ground work for my legislative priorities, I consult constituents, various stake holder groups and colleagues in both chambers as well as executive branch staff to understand state needs and gaps. I study the underlying policies and often look at successful legislative approaches in other states. My current legislative priorities continue to be health care access and quality, data privacy, AI consumer protection regimes, and the protection of the civil rights of all New Mexico residents. I will continue to work to support initiatives that improve our educational system and the welfare of our children and families.

3. How should the legislature address future water needs in an increasingly arid state?

Efforts that the state should advance are supporting technologies to mine and clean brackish water and encouraging more effective use of surface and ground water, especially in agriculture. The legislature should develop a regulatory frame work for deep water mining and for industries that rely heavily on water use such as resource extraction and data centers.

4. What criteria should be applied when considering proposed large economic development projects?

In addition to thinking strategically about what projects “fit” the state’s natural resource and labor skill sets, the state and/or local governments should develop and apply enviroment impact criteria that evaluate and inform the public as to the environmental and societal implications of a proposal. Mitigation measures should be required as appropriate based on the impact assessment.

5. What more can be done to ensure that residents have adequate access to health care in your district?

Improving patient access to health care requires both short-term strategies and long-term strategies. Short-term strategies include enacting all the health care compacts, implementing strong recruitment programs, sup-

porting increased physican residency programs, and offering robust loan repayment programs. Longer-term strategies include expanding the medical school and other health care educational programs. The quality of our schools and the safety of our neighborhoods are issues that have been cited as detracting from our recruitment efforts. We must continue to advance policies that address these issues as well.

Court of Appeals Judge Position 1

The great majority of cases heard by judges of the Court of Appeals are appeals from lower courts, since the New Mexico Court of Appeals sits between the state district courts and the New Mexico Supreme Court. Term: Eight years; no term limit.



Kris Houghton

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I believe wholeheartedly that due process is for everyone and that no one is above or beneath the law. I vow to uphold the US and NM Constitutions. I have served in this office since Gov. Lujan Grisham appointed me in 2025, after I was recommended to her by a bi-partisan nominating commission. I have since authored opinions for the Court in both criminal and civil law.

I served most of my 18-year legal career in the Dep’t of Justice at the US Attorney’s Office in ABQ. As an Assistant US Attorney, I handled criminal, civil, and appellate cases. I served overseas as DOJ’s Judicial Attaché in Colombia, and then returned to ABQ as Chief of the Criminal Division. Previously, I clerked for both the NM Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals.

2. What are the major challenges for an Appeals Court Judge?

The breadth of law is staggering; an appellate judge must accurately decide cases in every area of law (criminal, negligence, family, probate, property, to name but a few). But it is impossible to know all the law. A great judge humbly seeks input from other chambers, staff, and clerks to ensure each case reaches the right result for the right reasons. The work demands rigorous legal analysis and clear writing. I follow the example of my mentors by carefully parsing applicable rules, statutes, and case law. I then work tirelessly with fellow judges, clerks, and staff to ensure we draft an opinion that is understandable by the public. Finally, with ~800 cases filed in the court each year, the work load demands discipline and diligence.

3. What would be the most effective methods to improve Appeals Court procedures and efficiency?

With just ten judges on the Court of Appeals serving the entire State, there is a great need for efficiency. Toward that goal, the Court has developed a number of strategies over the years. For example, the Court manages a team of experienced staff attorneys who use a calendaring system to filter cases by degree of difficulty. The Court recently piloted a successful mediation program that facilitates settlement for appropriate cases. Those strategies have reduced the number of cases awaiting a decision. But the Court should (and does) strive toward continual improvement. To that end, the judges meet monthly to discuss and employ new methods. We are working to build more efficiency in the way we write and participate on our opinions.

4. What other information would you like voters to know about you?

I am married to María Montoya who is an OB/Gyn and attending physician at the University of New Mexico Hospital. My wife and I are raising

three children and stay busy with their football, soccer, basketball, and track activities. I earned my law degree from UNM School of Law, where I received the Dean's Award for Significant Contribution to the Law School Community and was on the Dean's List and Honor Roll. I also previously served as a Captain in the US Air Forces Reserves. I was commissioned as an officer in the US Air Force JAG Corps and was assigned to the 27th Special Operations Wing at Cannon Air Force Base and the 377th Air Base Wing at Kirtland Air Force Base.

District Court Judge 1st Judicial District Division 4

State district court judges hear many types of cases, both civil and criminal. Their civil cases include private injury lawsuits, contracts, real estate, family law, and some mental health and election-related issues. The criminal cases they hear include felony and more serious misdemeanor matters. Division 4 is primarily a Family Court.



Denise Marie Thomas

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I worked as an attorney for 26 years before being recommended by the bi-partisan Judicial Nominating Committee and appointed to serve as a District Judge by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham in March of 2024. I have served Santa Fe, Rio Arriba and Los Alamos Counties as the Family Court Judge since that time. I worked as a family law

attorney for 10 years before being appointed as a judge. I had the privilege of assisting families through some of the most difficult times in their lives, with the goal of helping them get through these experiences with dignity, compassion and understanding. The work I do as a judge is an extension of my work as an attorney; only now, I am able to reach and help even more people.

2. What in your background would serve you best as a District Court judge?

Before being appointed as a District Judge, I had a broad range of legal experience in civil, criminal and family law matters. I am able to draw on each of these areas of law in making decisions and assisting individuals who appear in court. Specifically, the eight years I worked with U.S. District Court Judge Martha Vazquez for the District of New Mexico, gave me invaluable experience in legal writing, analysis and in the courtroom that serves me now in my work as a judge.

3. In addition to hearing and deciding cases, how can you help improve the operations of District Court?

The District Court serves a large number of individuals who are unfamiliar with the court system, the law and are unable to afford to hire an attorney. As such, it can be a highly stressful and intimidating place for many people, especially when they have so much at stake. Education is critical to helping people understand their rights and the court process. Taking time to help people understand how to bring a case without counsel, what to expect during their case, and answer their questions best serves the individual parties and the court as a whole to arrive at more fair and just outcomes.

4. What policies are needed to keep the judiciary independent from political influence?

In New Mexico, all judges are bound by the Code of Judicial Conduct, which serves to maintain the independence and integrity of the judiciary. There are strict limitations on what a judge can and cannot do to avoid conflicts of interest and inappropriate political influence. Every judge should strive to adhere to the Code of Judicial Conduct and set aside their personal ideology when deciding a case. As a society, we should seek to have judges who make decisions based upon the applicable law and facts of a case, and nothing more. Electing judges with the strength of character to make difficult and, at times, unpopular decisions is imperative to judicial independence and our democracy.

5. What other information would you like the voters to know about you?

I am committed to public service. I was raised with the belief that if you are able to help, you should. Before becoming a judge, outside of my work as a lawyer, I dedicated a substantial amount of my time volunteering with organizations that help children and support education. I have served on the board of Girls, Inc. and Partners in Education. I was an event chair and President of the PTC at my children's school. I have also volunteered for Access to Justice, the St. Elizabeth's Shelter, the Adelante Program and the Food Depot. My work as a judge is yet another form of public service where I can continue helping children and families in our community. It is an honor and privilege to be able to do this work.

District Court Judge 1st Judicial District Division 8

State district court judges hear many types of cases, both civil and criminal. Their civil cases include private injury lawsuits, contracts, real estate, family law, and some mental health and election-related issues. The criminal cases they hear include felony and more serious misdemeanor matters. Division 8 is primarily an Adult Criminal Court.



Anastasia Rose Martin

(Democratic)

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I am qualified for this position because my education, experience and connection to the community ensure equity, equality and justice. I started my legal career at the First Judicial District Attorney's Office in Santa Fe and stayed with the office for approximately ten years. I practiced in Rio Arriba County for roughly six of those years and conducted

approximately 75-100 jury trials. I was appointed by a non-partisan judicial nominating commission and the Governor to serve as a District Court Judge for Division 8 in July 2025. Therefore, my trial experience, connection to the community and experience on the bench make me uniquely qualified for this position.

2. What in your background would serve you best as a District Court judge?

The experience, knowledge and relationships that I have gained throughout the duration of my career as well as my commitment to the community serve me best as a current District Court Judge. Given my extensive trial experience I am very comfortable with courtroom procedure, the rules of evidence and trial practice. I believe that these skills are invaluable on the bench. Additionally, given the experience that I had practicing in Rio Arriba I am very aware of gaps in services as well as systemic community issues such as

deficient community transportation. This knowledge is extremely important to ensure that I can help direct individuals to services that are needed and ensure that they can comply with court orders.

3. In addition to hearing and deciding cases, how can you help improve the operations of District Court?

Prior to being appointed to the bench I was the Adult Protective Services Attorney for the New Mexico Aging and Long-Term Services Department and was General Counsel for the agency for approximately three and half years. During my time as General Counsel, I learned the intricacy and importance of administration and I brought that understanding to the bench. Some of the operations that I have been working to improve is the modernization of warrant service with the courts and law enforcement to ensure that warrants and warrant returns are entered electronically which significantly reduces the risk of an improper arrest as well creates real time notification to the courts when a warrant returned is filed.

4. What policies are needed to keep the judiciary independent from political influence?

It is imperative that the judiciary maintain independence from political influence to ensure that justice is served for all regardless of their socio-economic, cultural or political differences. I went through a non-partisan judicial nominating commission and believe that process is very important to ensure judicial independence. Further, public perception of the judicial process shapes the confidence individuals have in the judiciary. Therefore, it is very important that there is equal access to courts as well as a robust judicial standards commission.

5. What other information would you like the voters to know about you?

I am extremely committed to our community and have dedicated my career to public services. I am a parent to two wonderful children (ages 5 and 12) and being a parent has strengthened my commitment to serve our community. Both of my children participate in various activities including soccer, mariachi, band and dance and these activities allow me to engage with the community in a meaningful non-work related way. In addition to my experience and interest in trial practice it is important to me as a community member, parent and a professional that I am contributing to the community in a positive and productive way.

Los Alamos County Municipal Judge

The Municipal Court's jurisdiction includes all municipal and county offenses, including non-felony traffic violations. Municipal Judges serve four-year terms.



Elizabeth K Allen

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as County Municipal Judge.

I hold a law degree from Pepperdine School of Law and have nearly two decades of legal experience, including roles as a prosecutor, defense attorney, and private practitioner. By year's end, I will have eight years of service as Municipal Judge. I also

teach law courses and train judges statewide, combining legal expertise, judicial experience, and a strong commitment to education and community-focused justice.

2. Describe your understanding of the legal codes that govern the mat-

ters over which the County Municipal Judge has jurisdiction.

Since being sworn in as an attorney 18 years ago, I have worked diligently to understand and represent all sides of the legal system. My career has included service as both a prosecutor and a defense attorney, giving me a comprehensive and practical understanding of criminal law, constitutional protections, and the real-world impacts of judicial decisions. This balanced perspective allows me as a judge to approach each case with fairness, neutrality, and respect for the rights of all parties.

3. What factors should the County Municipal Judge consider when determining the appropriate sentence for an offender?

For seven years as Municipal Judge in Los Alamos, I have learned that effective sentencing requires more than legal knowledge. I approach each case with patience, empathy, and a focus on problem-solving, especially in a rural community with limited resources. My goal is to impose sentences that are fair, consistent, and tailored to the individual, balancing accountability with opportunities for rehabilitation.

4. Describe your experience working with local entities that may be involved in the County Municipal Court System (e.g., police, mental health providers, teen court, etc).

I collaborate closely with social services, detention, JJAB and community programs to support effective outcomes in municipal court. I chair the Los Alamos Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and helped develop a strategic plan expanding peer support, crisis response, and mental health services. I support prevention efforts like the youth summit, Hawk Hangout and oversee Teen Court, mentoring student volunteers while promoting trauma-informed practices.

5. How has your community involvement prepared you for the role of County Municipal Judge?

My community involvement has strengthened my ability to serve as Municipal Judge by keeping me connected and responsive to local needs. I serve on nonprofit boards, host over 425 students annually for court field trips, and support prevention efforts, including free drug testing. These experiences reinforce my commitment to a court that is accessible, respectful, and transparent, where all individuals feel heard and understood.

Los Alamos County Magistrate Judge

The Magistrate Court's jurisdiction includes civil complaints of up to \$10,000, criminal misdemeanor cases, some traffic cases, and felony preliminary hearings. Magistrate Judges serve four-year terms.



Catherine E Taylor

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as County Magistrate Judge.

I have served as Magistrate Judge since January 1, 2023. Additionally, I am a licensed attorney since 2000 and previously worked as a prosecutor in criminal courts and California State Bar Court. I currently serve on the board of the New Mexico

Magistrate Judges Association and its Legislative Committee. I was recently appointed to the Magistrate Judges Advisory Committee by the New Mexico Supreme Court.

2. Describe your understanding of the legal codes that govern the matters over which the County Magistrate Judge has jurisdiction.

Magistrate Court is a court of limited jurisdiction, which means I hear criminal matters including traffic offenses, misdemeanors (through jury trial), and felonies (through preliminary hearing); landlord/tenant disputes; and civil matters up to \$10,000 in controversy. I have a thorough understanding of the statutes, rules, and codes which govern all of these proceedings.

3. What factors should the County Magistrate Judge consider in determining the appropriate sentence for an offender?

The Code of Judicial Conduct precludes me from commenting on or appearing to make promises in connection with cases or issues likely to come before the court. Generally speaking, however, the primary factor to be considered is the applicable statute(s): i.e., what does the law require? Where the law allows for a judge to vary from the prescribed sentence, consideration of aggravating/mitigating factors; a defendant's criminal history; or a defendant's status (e.g., juvenile) are also relevant.

4. What personal qualities do you consider to be important for the County Magistrate Judge?

I consider integrity, impartiality, patience, and respect to be the most important qualities as a judge. Many cases are contentious and complicated, but each side deserves to be heard within the rules. My role is to patiently listen to both sides and apply the law fairly and impartially, even if the result will be unpopular. I remain committed to fairness, our rights, and the rule of law.

Los Alamos County Sheriff

The Los Alamos County Charter states: "The Sheriff shall have those powers and duties assigned to sheriffs by state statutes, including the powers of a peace officer, but the Sheriff shall not duplicate or perform those duties in this Charter or by ordinance or resolution assigned or delegated to the County's Police Department." The County Sheriff serves a four-year term.



Antonio L. Maggiore

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as County Sheriff.

I am a gardener, a bartender, a former County Councilor, and a lifelong resident of Los Alamos. In my opinion, the biggest qualification for any public office is a willingness and desire to learn and serve the community. As a former County Councilor, I understand and respect the unique role of the Sheriff in Los Alamos. In short, I am running for Sheriff simply to serve and strengthen our community.

2. As County Sheriff, how would you engage with the Police Department to serve the needs of Los Alamos County residents?

I would work with the Police Department to be an advocate for both the Police and for the citizens of the community. I understand and respect the boundaries between the roles of the Sheriff's office and the Police Department, and I believe the Sheriff should work to serve and be responsive to the community and support the Police department as needed.

3. How would you ensure that the public has access to up-to-date and accurate information about registered sex offenders in the community?

I would continue to use the Offender Watch program that is currently used by our Sheriff's Department and work to raise awareness of the associated app that concerned citizens can download to stay immediately informed of any changes. I would continue to ensure the posters in the lobby of the

police station are current and up to date. As well as staying informed on any state or federal changes to registry requirements and ensuring the department has the necessary resources to comply with the law.

Los Alamos County Assessor

The County Assessor is the elected official responsible for valuing all real and personal property for taxing authorities in the County. Taxing authorities include such organizations as school districts, county hospitals, municipalities, conservancy districts, and flood control authorities. The assessor also develops and maintains all parcel information in the county and administers the granting of certain exemptions allowable by the N.M. Property Tax Code. The County Assessor serves a four-year term.



James Curtis Wernicke, Jr.

(Libertarian)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as the County Assessor.

My background combines public service, data science, and technology. I've spent twelve years as a computer scientist at the lab and have published numerous local articles analyzing complex public-policy data. I would bring an independent third-party

perspective to the office, modernizing analysis and data sharing, improving taxpayer outreach, and using evidence from the office to help educate voters and policymakers about better property-tax policy.

2. What experience do you have with respect to residential and commercial real estate?

I am a Los Alamos homeowner and local business owner with hands-on experience overseeing a commercial property. I have analyzed local sales, valuations, and neighborhood trends while developing a public property-data tool, and I regularly publish my analyses for the community. I recently attended a protest hearing which validated the usefulness of some statistical methods such as how tracking valuation changes against neighborhood trends could reveal inconsistencies and improve transparency.

3. How do you plan to maintain fairness and transparency in residential and commercial property valuation?

Fairness requires consistent methods, accurate data, and information taxpayers can understand. I would make valuation data, neighborhood comparisons, and changes over time easier to examine, while improving outreach so eligible residents receive exemptions they are entitled to. I would also use office data to educate voters and policymakers about tax policies that create inequities or discourage productive redevelopment, housing, and local economic opportunity.

4. What is your experience supervising an office heavily reliant on computer systems and confidential financial information?

My professional experience includes developing and supporting complex, data-intensive computer systems where reliability, access control, data integrity, and operational continuity mattered. I have worked with software development, databases, automation, and technical support, and I understand the importance of protecting confidential information while ensuring public records remain accurate, accessible, and well managed.



Jeff Casalina

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as the County Assessor.

I served on the boards of two homeowners associations in California before moving to Los Alamos where I was the president of the Quemazon association. I currently work with homeowners as part of the Pajarito Acres Architectural Committee.

2. What experience do you have with respect to residential and commercial real estate?

I was a real estate appraiser and appraisal business owner for over twenty years holding state licenses in California, Wisconsin and New Mexico. I also served as a Realty Specialist and Staff Appraiser for the U.S. Navy, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, based in Naples, Italy where I performed complex appraisals of commercial and industrial properties throughout southern Europe and Bahrain.

3. How do you plan to maintain fairness and transparency in residential and commercial property valuation?

The computer systems are designed to be fair and transparent. However, understandably, variations in individual properties might not be properly valued. Therefore, I plan to be available to anyone having a concern and will see that such variations are accurately valued.

4. What is your experience supervising an office heavily reliant on computer systems and confidential financial information?

I was an early adopter of computer technology in my appraisal practices and understand the limitations and security risks involved. I will do everything I can to ensure that systems are safe and that confidential financial information is protected.

Los Alamos County Councilor

The Los Alamos County Council is the County’s governing body and was created by the Los Alamos County Charter. The Council consists of seven members elected at large for four-year staggered terms. Four seats will be filled in the 2026 election by the four candidates receiving the most votes. The County Council generally holds two regular sessions per month, plus one work session. Its members also serve as liaisons with the County’s Boards and Commissions and other governmental entities.



Steven S Lynne

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

As a 30-year resident, I care about our community and count my ability to listen and understand multiple points of view as a key asset for service on Council. I began my career as a CPA, auditing local governments, including Los Alamos County. During

my 28-year career at Los Alamos County, I contributed as Chief Financial Officer and County Manager, attended hundreds of Council meetings and worked with a wide variety of Councilors. My board service includes the Los Alamos Community Foundation.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

The County Council can continue to optimize the use of public land for needed housing, including the use of our affordable housing programs to incentivize affordable options as much as practical. Focusing on and incentivizing in-fill and redevelopment projects could also help with downtown revitalization and economic development. Enhancing use of the Local Economic Development Act (including retail) and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Act will help with both these priorities.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County’s vision for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

Modest growth could help address housing demand and support our community including businesses, infrastructure, schools, and LANL staff. Suggested strategies have included supporting in-fill and redevelopment opportunities as much as possible, and I agree. Factors such as traffic and roadway impacts, utility requirements and school capacities need to be considered and managed to mitigate unintended consequences of growth, and to maintain our community priorities including open space access.

4. The County’s budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Capital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

I have worked with community members in the past to assess and prioritize capital projects. Hearing and understanding citizens’ thoughts and concerns about potential projects is a vital preliminary step. Factors that should be considered when prioritizing projects include alignment with the community’s identified strategic goals, cost effectiveness, funding leverage, future operating costs, and population served. As needs evolve, continued dialogue with community members is essential.



Chris Luchini

(Libertarian)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

I’ve served on various corporate, civic, volunteer and political boards over the last 30 years, both as executive officers and policy board member.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

The County government can influence the creation of more housing by keeping in mind that time and regulatory friction increase costs. You can’t get affordable housing as long as building costs are extremely high. While the costs of the trades (electrical/plumbing/hvac/construction) are largely outside of the influence of the County government, Land use, planning and all administrative delay and friction can be improved by the County Council.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County’s vision for land use, housing, transportation,

economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

The Comprehensive Plan must be expanded to include new housing construction outside of the LA/WR city centers. Restricting almost all new housing to MultiStory construction will never result in affordable housing without government money as subsidy to construction costs. The only solution to housing prices is to increase housing supply. More land must be made available by LANL/LACounty/? and the LAC must have a sense of urgency to permit and construct that housing development.

4. The County's budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Capital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

Those projects that have the greatest impact on business formation and growth should have the highest priority. Next I would place environmental concerns: Massively expanded electric vehicle charging stations for instance. Purely aesthetic projects should have lowest priority.



Jason Alan Chappel

(Republican)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

I bring a practical, real- world perspective that is shaped by my work as an Assistant Store Leader at Smith's Marketplace in Las Alamos where I manage daily operations, budgets, and team leadership. I've also served as the Vice Chair of the Los Alamos

Schools Credit Union, Vice Chair of the Los Alamos County Public Library Board and as a member of the Los Alamos County Transportation Board. As a veteran, I value accountability, teamwork and service; principles I'll bring to the council.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

The County should increase housing supply by streamlining permitting, updating zoning where appropriate, and prioritizing workforce housing so that people who work here have a fair opportunity to live here. We also need to reduce unnecessary red tape that makes it harder for businesses to open and grow, and better utilize existing vacant spaces. Practical reforms can move both forward together.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County's vision for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

Los Alamos and White Rock should pursue thoughtful and measured growth that supports housing and local businesses without losing what makes these communities special. Growth is necessary but should be done right. It should focus on existing areas and infrastructure and not expansion for the sake of it. As we grow, we will need to balance housing, traffic, and density with quality of life, guided by practical planning and community input.

4. The County's budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Cap-

ital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

I would prioritize projects based on community impact, long-term value, and financial responsibility. Core infrastructure, public safety, and projects that support housing and economic development should come first. We also need to take a closer look at costs, avoid unnecessary spending, and limit overreliance on outside consultants, not what looks good on paper. Just as important, the community should be involved earlier in the process, not after projects are already developed.



Theresa Ann Cull

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

Los Alamos County Councilor since January 2023; Chair in 2025. Currently President of the Board of the Unitarian Church; served on other non-profit Boards. Retired from LANL in 2020; many years in management (environment, safety, health, and facilities). Volunteered as youth sports coach and Mexico

Mission youth advisor; raised two children in Los Alamos. Knowledge of how the County operates; budgets; decision-making; familiarity with Schools, businesses, and community organizations/activities.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

Council is taking actions, but progress is slow. Affordable housing projects: DP Road apartments, 9th St, apartments, and A8A housing project on DP Road. Market-rate housing projects underway to add to housing inventory. Council approved MRAs in Los Alamos and White Rock and small business LEDA process for developers and businesses. Council also worked with the Local/Small Business Coalition to identify actions to support their needs and encourage business development; implementation underway.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County's vision for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

County should focus growth primarily on redevelopment of blighted areas and development of County-owned lands (not open space). County Building Code now allows higher buildings in Downtown MRAs and more infill. Trade-off is the view; loss of "small town" feel. Little remaining land transfer expected from DOE; I am opposed to transfer of other federal government land to the County for development. ADUs might be considered. Growth should be limited to what the current infrastructure can sustain.

4. The County's budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Capital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

Projects that are necessary to provide basic services (roads, infrastructure) and ensure the safety of the community (fire station replacement, social services hub) should be a higher priority. Priority should also be given to maintaining what we already have (ball fields, parks, ice rink) before building something new. New projects (North Mesa Recreation) should be evaluated

based on their overall value to the community and their ability to support the local economy.



David E Hampton

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

I'm currently on the UNM-LA Advisory Board, Planning & Zoning Commission, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Transportation Advisory, Environmental Sustainability, Personnel, and Amigos del Rancho Los Luceros, having previously

served on Parks & Recreation, Board of Registration, Cooperative Market, and Arts Council. I've attended almost all County Council meetings since 2021, including Strategic Leadership Planning and Budget Hearings. I retired from LANL Project Controls in 2017.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

For housing, the Development Code needs to be re-examined relating to accessory dwelling units, parking minimums, minimum lot sizes, minimum dwelling sizes, setbacks, and zoning densities. For redevelopment, pursue financial tools made available to us within our MRAs in Los Alamos and White Rock, and through LEDA. Work with our regional partners, like the Pueblo de San Ildefonso, to develop a regional tourism approach. Re-examine our approach to contracting, especially with our non-profits.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County's vision for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

Previous studies indicate growth to 27,000-30,000 people. Start by adding 2,500 new units, most of which are already approved, and possibly go higher, depending on infrastructure constraints, with affordable housing a priority. Focus primarily on infill and redevelopment in our downtown areas, with some gentle density in our other neighborhoods. Promote downtown walkability and provide additional public transportation options around transit oriented development and sustainable business.

4. The County's budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Capital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

I'd prioritize in this order: Deferred Infrastructure Maintenance, Broadband, Social Services Facilities, ADA Compliance, NM4 Crossing, Streets (Central).



Melanee M Hand

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

I am in my fifth year serving as a Los Alamos County Councilor. I bring experience, formal training, and a strong understanding of current issues. I served on multiple County Boards since the 1990s and regional boards while on Council. Before retiring from LANL, I worked in group and team leadership, land

use planning, project development/management, construction management, and environmental programs. I have a Master's in Organizational Management, Bachelor's in Environmental Design.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

Council should continue efforts working with developers to improve housing availability and variety. Los Alamos County needs housing options to support a range of income levels for workers who sustain our local and small businesses and LANL/DOE Programs. I strongly support regional collaboration, recognizing that much of our workforce lives throughout northern New Mexico and that our housing and workforce solutions must reflect this broader reality.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County's vision for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

Growth is limited by available land and the level of density residents want. More people increase pressure on aging infrastructure, requiring costly upgrades. These expenses can fall on today's taxpayers while benefits go to future residents and visitors. Growth decisions must balance community preferences, infrastructure capacity, and long-term financial responsibility to ensure fairness and sustainability.

4. The County's budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Capital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

Project priorities should be guided by citizen input, with emphasis on safety, health, and operational needs. Expansion can occur as funding and public interest allow. Priorities must align with the Council's Strategic Leadership Plan, include estimates and alternatives, seek State and Federal funding, and coordinate with the County budget to ensure efficiency and essential services. Also, it's important to support fun activities and creative ways to keep our community engaged.



Eric Roland Stromberg

(Republican)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as a County Councilor.

I've been a member of the Board of Public Utilities for the past 6 years. In that time I have interacted with County Council, different boards, and County Legal. I'm familiar with the structure of County Government.

2. The community consistently ranks affordable housing and economic development as top priorities for the County. What actions can the County Council take to address them?

There is not as much available land as there are empty buildings. LANL is hiring more people and they will need places to live. I will work with the Council and LANL to investigate opportunities to work together to provide more housing. Building higher structures in the place of empty buildings might be an option.

3. This year, the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan, which articulates the County's vision for land use, housing, transportation, economic development, and environmental stewardship. One of the most pressing issues is the question of growth. How much and where do you think the

County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

County should grow? What quality-of-life tradeoffs do you think the community will need to consider?

The County does not have many options in terms of accessing more land. We are surrounded by DOE, tribal lands, and BLM. We can work with LANL to see if there are mutually beneficial opportunities. In terms of population growth, yes, there are trade-offs. More traffic, possibility for more crime. More kids in schools, altering the teacher-student ratio. Strained medical care. Growth is inevitable and these will be some of the challenges we will have to face.

4. The County's budget includes a substantial number of unfunded Capital Improvement Projects. How would you prioritize which projects to fund?

Prioritize the projects that benefit the highest number of people and resonate with the community.

Los Alamos County Probate Judge

The Probate Court, in an office within the County Clerk's office, is convened by appointment with the Judge to probate wills. Probate Judges serve four-year terms.



Perry C Klare

(Democratic)

1. Describe your qualifications and experiences that have prepared you to serve as County Probate Judge.

Born and raised in Los Alamos, I bring over a decade of legal experience to the bench. I earned my J.D. from UNM and have practiced in NM since 2014. I spent seven years at the Law Offices of the Public Defender handling complex dockets. Now, I run a solo practice covering civil, criminal, and probate law. Appointed Los

Alamos County Probate Judge in January 2024, my deep litigation background and active judicial service equip me to efficiently execute the duties of this office.

2. What personal qualities do you consider to be important for a Probate Judge?

Empathy, patience, clarity, and legal rigor are vital for a Probate Judge. Probate Court is often a citizen's only interaction with the judicial system, usually following a loved one's passing. A judge must blend thorough legal knowledge with a deeply compassionate approach. Communicating statutory procedures clearly ensures grieving families feel respected and guided, not overwhelmed by jargon. Accessibility is also essential for the timely and proper administration of estates.

3. What is your experience working with the public, which includes people from diverse educational, economic, and cultural backgrounds?

I have dedicated my career to advocating for people from all walks of life. During my seven years at the Law Offices of the Public Defender, I fought daily for indigent and marginalized clients facing severe crises. I also served as legal representative for the Drug Recovery Court, supporting individuals overcoming addiction. In my private practice and as Probate Judge, I remain committed to judicial accessibility, ensuring everyone is treated with dignity through the legal process.

JUDICIAL RETENTION ELECTION

In a non-partisan retention election, voters may vote either "yes" or "no" for each judge standing for retention. To retain office, a judge must receive 57% "yes" votes out of all the votes cast on the question of retention. The website of the Judicial Performance Evaluation Committee, www.nmjpec.org, includes evaluations and information about judicial retention candidates.

Justice of the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the highest court in New Mexico. Most of the cases decided by the New Mexico Supreme Court justices are final appeals from lower state courts. The Supreme Court also has supervisory control over all the lower courts and all attorneys licensed in the state. Initially, Supreme Court justices are either appointed by the Governor or win in a general election. Appointed judges must run in the next general election, so that others can run against them for the same office. After winning in a general election, all justices face a nonpartisan retention election every eight years. To remain on the Court they must receive at least 57% of the vote in a retention election. Term: Eight years; no term limits.



David K Thomson - Retention

1. What qualifies you for this position?

I have served eight years as Justice on the New Mexico Supreme Court. I just finished a two year term as Chief Justice. I am honored to receive a "Retain" recommendation from the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission. I started my judicial career as a trial court judge in the 1st Judicial Court. I served in the House of Delegates for the American Bar Association. I am a member of the American Law Institute. I have developed a rule of law initiative where we travel around the state to conduct oral

argument and visit local schools. I have been recognized for my work in judicial education and I teach legal education on a number of topics. I am a native of Santa Fe, NM.

2. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the NM Supreme Court practices and why?

As Chief Justice, I developed an on line portal where the public can see what cases we are considering and how our work compares to our performance measures. Transparency and professionalism were the themes of my tenure. The judiciary should continue to advocate for its independence from the other political branches. The Supreme Court should continue to advance the rule of law and get out to the community to ensure that the citizens of this State understand our role in the democratic system.

3. What improvements, if any, are needed in the Supreme Court?

Our main job is to decide cases in a timely manner and write decisions that lawyers and non-lawyers can understand. We should continue to make efforts to expand our rule of law program and to make legal assistance affordable and accessible for all New Mexicans. For citizens to trust their government they must trust that the Supreme Court is an independent and unbiased institution.



Shannon Bacon - Retention

1. What qualifies you for this position?

I have been serving New Mexico as a judge for over 16 years. I bring that experience and my passion for the rule of law to my work everyday. I am also a leader locally and nationally on issues that state courts must address: access to the courts, rural justice, artificial intelligence, and legal education and licensing reform.

2. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the NM Supreme Court practices and why?

The Court has moved to a new calendar system that requires the justices to file all opinions heard in a term (September to July) by July 15. Continuing to refine and expand this process is important because timely deciding our

cases provides stability and predictability for the judicial system and the community.

3. What improvements, if any, are needed in the Supreme Court?

The continuing challenge for the Supreme Court and the judiciary as a whole is addressing access to justice -- providing legal representation for those who cannot afford it. Improving how New Mexicans can effectively and affordably access the courts is a constant need.

Judge of the Court of Appeals

The great majority of cases heard by Court of Appeals judges are appeals of lower court rulings, since the New Mexico Court of Appeals sits between the state district courts and the New Mexico Supreme Court. Initially, Court of Appeals judges are either appointed by the governor or win in a general election. Appointed judges must run in the next general election, so that others can run against them for the same office. After winning in a general election, all Court of Appeals judges face a nonpartisan retention election every eight years. To remain on the Court they must receive at least 57% of the vote in a retention election. Term: Eight years; no term limit.



J Miles Hanisee - Retention

1. What qualifies you for this position?

It has been my honor to serve New Mexicans as one of ten judges on the Court of Appeals for more than 15 years. In that time, I've been elected twice, authored over 1000 cases on behalf of our court, and served as a judge on thousands more. I am grateful that the Judicial Performance Evaluation Commission recommends that I be retained for another term, and strive every day to efficiently and swiftly resolve disputes of critical

importance to people, families, and businesses throughout our state. Upholding individual rights, ensuring adherence to the constitution and laws of New Mexico, and resolving appeals without preference or bias are the hallmarks of judicial service, to which I faithfully adhere.

2. What changes, if any, would you recommend to the NM Court of Appeals practices and why?

The New Mexico Court of Appeals resolves nearly 1000 cases a year, ranging from criminal to civil to administrative, affecting numerous people, communities, the environment and our state's precious natural resources. Finding a way to speed up complicated appellate processes, while providing litigants an appropriate amount of time to develop and present their cases, is always a challenge. I support modernizing rules related to notices of appeal, docketing statements (preliminarily identifying issues on appeal), and the provision of trial court records to appellate courts in order to more quickly render cases capable of resolution by our court.

3. What improvements, if any, are needed in the Court of Appeals?

Simplifying court processes to emphasize access to justice, providing an environment that is even more open and transparent and explanatory, adjusting to changes in technology and the use of artificial intelligence, supplying answers that are readable and able to be understood by any member of the public, and not just lawyers, are areas in which all courts--including ours--can improve. We as a court of ten judges, assisted by our staff attorneys and law clerks and paralegals and administrative professionals, are committed to bettering ourselves and our court in the months and years to come, recognizing the critical and evolving role of the judiciary in New Mexico.

State District Court

State District Court judges hear many types of cases, both civil and criminal. Their civil cases include private injury lawsuits, contracts, real estate, family law, and some mental health and election-related issues. The criminal cases they hear include felony and more serious misdemeanor matters. Initially, District Court judges are either appointed by the governor or win in a general election. Appointed judges must run in the next general election so that others can run against them for the same office. After winning in a general election, all District Court judges face a nonpartisan retention election every six years. To remain on the Court they must receive at least 57% of the vote in a retention election. Term: Six years; no term limits.

Judge of the 1st Judicial District Division 01



Francis J Mathew - Retention

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I have served in this office since February 2013. After being recommended by a bipartisan selection committee, I was appointed to this position by the then Governor and was elected in a general election in 2014. I was retained in this office by a vote for my retention in the general election of 2020. As a lawyer, I represented individuals, local business entities, national companies, banking institutions,

debtors, creditors, plaintiffs and defendants. I have experienced litigation as a party as well as a representative attorney. I have participated in the community as a board member on non-profits and advisory school boards. I believe these experiences have given me perspective, empathy, patience needed to serve in this office.

2. In addition to hearing and deciding cases, how have you helped improve the operations of the District Court?

I have served on various statewide committees and in this District, including the Statewide Judicial Budget committees which reviews and analyzes the budgets of every judicial district, the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court and then makes recommendations used by the Supreme Court and the Legislature in setting the Statewide Judicial Budget. In addition, I serve as the presiding judge for this Court's Treatment Court program dealing with criminal defendants' mental health and addiction issues.

3. What policies are needed to keep the judiciary independent from political influence?

The Judiciary relies on the Legislature for funding of its operations and programs and the Governor's approval of that funding. As long as the Judiciary has this dependence, it will be susceptible to political influence. In addition, without deciding whether it is a good or bad process, each judge and justice must go through at least one general contested election and then go through general uncontested retention elections. This process is inherently political, and candidates and judges remain susceptible to political influence under this system. Providing the judiciary with funding in a way that is not dependent on a political system by way of legislative grant and subject to a gubernatorial veto would assist this process.

4. What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to equal justice in this judicial district?

The greatest obstacle is the lack of attorneys available or willing to assist poor and modest means citizens who are not able to handle the technical-

ties of the legal system, including the requirements for presenting cases in court under the rules of procedure and evidence. The court's ability to assist these citizens is limited to general advice and forms, as the court's role in disputes is as a decision maker and not a representative of any party or an advocate for any party. The public does not always understand the limitations or restrictions placed on the court and its employees. This Judicial District is understaffed and underpaid. The District needs more employees who are appropriately compensated.

5. What other information would you like the voters to know about you?

I graduated from law school and commenced practicing in Santa Fe in 1979. I started my law practice in a general practice law firm handling probates, landlord tenant disputes, commercial transactions, commercial disputes, banking issues, property law issues, including property transactions and disputes, domestic relations matters dealing with divorces and custody disputes and a limited amount of criminal law. In 2003, I opened my own law firm and practiced as a sole practitioner handling the same types of matters and cases and in 2006, I served as the Probate Judge for Santa Fe County. I have raised my family in Santa Fe, served on community boards and continuously served the people of this Judicial District.

Judge of the 1st Judicial District Division 07



T Glenn Ellington - Retention

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I have served as a district judge in the first judicial district for 18 years. During that time I have presided over thousands of criminal, civil, family, and children's court cases. In addition to my tenure on the district court bench, I have also served as a Judge on the New Mexico Court of Appeals, Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Department of Taxation and Revenue and Chief Public Defender for the state

of New Mexico. I also have 14 years of experience as a trial attorney both in the public and private sector.

2. In addition to hearing and deciding cases, how have you helped improve the operations of the District Court?

Over the years I have sat on multiple committees tasked with improving and modernizing daily practices beginning in the 1990s when we worked from paper files to the present day when we conduct multiple remote hearings and have a completely digital filing system.

3. What policies are needed to keep the judiciary independent from political influence?

Recognition that the judiciary is an independent and coequal branch of government

4. What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to equal justice in this judicial district?

The lack of resources at all levels, including resources for the courts partners within the community who provided direct services related to cases adjudicated in the district court

Judge of the 1st Judicial District Division 10



Kathleen McGarry Ellenwood - Retention

1. What qualifies you for this office?

I practiced law for 33 years before I took the bench; in these last 6 years, I have had the opportunity to preside over all types of civil cases and work with litigants, represented or not, and reach resolutions in cases that are important to them and their lives. Those experiences will serve me well going forward, if the citizens of this Judicial District chose to

retain me.

2. In addition to hearing and deciding cases, how have you helped improve the operations of the District Court?

I try to encourage the employees to ask questions about cases that are before me to help them understand the issues. We all benefit from having employees feel challenged by their jobs and feeling that they are making a difference in the process. We now have 11 judges in our district and I do what I can to make sure a new judge feels welcome and to answer questions they may have. We are lucky to have many of the resources we have in the First Judicial Court. Our Family Court Services, Pretrial Services and Treatment Court provide options here that many of the courts around the state do not have.

3. What policies are needed to keep the judiciary independent from political influence?

Many policies are all ready in place, there are Judicial Standards that all judges must follow and that guide us in what is appropriate and what is not. In New Mexico, the use of retention elections help to keep political influence at a minimum, letting the people decide whether to keep a judge, or not. Due to restrictions, judges do not do a lot of campaigning which is good and bad. Good, because it helps limit the political influencers, but bad because it is hard for the voting public to find out a lot of information on judicial candidates.

4. What do you perceive as the greatest obstacles to equal justice in this judicial district?

The lack of understanding the judicial process of many of the people who come into our court. So many people cannot afford a lawyer that they are forced to represent themselves (appearing pro se). Trying to navigate the process can be overwhelming. We now have a state-wide Helpline to assist pro se litigants and answer questions. While the judges can try to explain the process and procedures, we must be careful not to give legal advice. The other obstacle is the language barriers that many persons have. Our certified court interpreters are available to assist, but these resources are tight. People often have trouble filling out the forms to be filed. The Courts are doing better, but we can always improve.

5. What other information would you like the voters to know about you?

My hope is that any person that comes into my courtroom will feel that they had a fair opportunity to present their case, win or lose. I believe strongly in the rights that the Constitutions of New Mexico and the United States provide and try my best to interpret the laws passed by the Legislature. When not on the bench, or working on cases, I like to ride my bike and play with our two Australian Cattle dogs. We have such diverse communities in the First Judicial District, getting out and enjoying the land and the people help me understand better the people whose cases come before me.

Constitutional Amendments

Constitutional Amendment 1

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 4, SECTION 22 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF NEW MEXICO TO REQUIRE THE GOVERNOR TO PROVIDE VETO MESSAGES ON ALL BILLS VETOED IN WHOLE OR IN PART AND TO PROVIDE THAT ALL BILLS PASSED BY THE LEGISLATURE AND NOT ACTED ON BY THE GOVERNOR WILL BECOME LAW. For ____ Against ____

Explanation:

This proposed amendment would remove the “pocket veto.” The pocket veto occurs when the governor does not sign a bill that was passed during the last three days of the legislative session, stopping the bill from becoming law. Under the proposed amendment, a bill sent to the governor during the last three days of the session would automatically become law unless the governor vetoes the bill within 20 days after the legislature’s adjournment. Also, the governor would be required to provide a written, substantive explanation for any veto.

Arguments For:

- Requires the governor to give a written explanation about why any legislation is vetoed, so that the legislature can reintroduce legislation in the future to address the governor’s concerns.
- May bring greater balance among branches of government because lawmakers could ask the courts to determine whether the governor has provided a substantive explanation.

Arguments Against:

- The term ‘substantive explanation’ is undefined and may lead to court action between the legislature and the governor.
- The governor’s office might be burdened after the session by a large number of bills that would need a ‘substantive explanation’ of their veto.
- It is unnecessary since the legislature could eliminate the pocket veto simply by enacting important legislation earlier in the session.

Constitutional Amendment 2

PROPOSING TO AMEND ARTICLE 7, SECTION 1 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF NEW MEXICO TO REMOVE THE REQUIREMENT THAT SCHOOL ELECTIONS BE SEPARATE FROM PARTISAN ELECTIONS. For ____ Against ____

Explanation:

This amendment would allow school districts the option to add bond and mill levy questions to ballots in a partisan election, such as the regular general election. It would also give the legislature the authority to allow local school board elections to be held during the same election cycle as partisan elections.

Arguments For:

- Currently school districts can only place bond issues and mill levy

questions in local nonpartisan elections, which are held in odd numbered years. If the proposed amendment passes, school boards have the option to place bond issues or mill levy questions on the ballot in any election cycle, giving them more flexibility to manage their capital needs.

- Allowing school districts to place a bond or mill levy question on the ballot during partisan general elections may increase the number of voters who participate in school elections, better reflecting the voice of the community.
- School districts still have the option to hold special bond elections if these better suit their needs.

Arguments Against:

- Adding school questions to the general election ballot may create voter fatigue and increase the cost of elections if a longer ballot is needed.
- The importance of school issues on a partisan general election ballot may be diminished due to the high number of issues and candidates on the ballot.

Constitutional Amendment 3

PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 12, SECTION 13 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF NEW MEXICO TO ESTABLISH NOMINATING COMMITTEES TO PROVIDE LISTS OF NOMINEES TO THE GOVERNOR FOR APPOINTMENT OF NONSTUDENT MEMBERS TO THE BOARDS OF REGENTS OF STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS; PROVIDING THAT STUDENT MEMBERS OF BOARDS OF REGENTS SHALL BE APPOINTED FROM A LIST PROVIDED BY AN ELECTED STUDENT GOVERNING BODY OF THE INSTITUTION; PROVIDING THAT, EXCEPT FOR A STUDENT MEMBER, MEMBERS OF THE BOARDS OF REGENTS SHALL NOT HAVE CHANGED THEIR POLITICAL PARTY REGISTRATION IN THE TWELVE MONTHS PRECEDING APPOINTMENT.

For ____ Against ____

Explanation:

A board of regents governs each of the ten state educational institutions. Currently, the regents for each of these institutions are appointed by the governor and approved by the Senate. The amendment would:

- Require the governor to appoint:
 - regents from a list of candidates selected by a nonpartisan nominating committee established by the legislature; and
 - student regents from a list provided by each institution’s student government, not the institution’s president.
- Disqualify any non-student regents if they changed political party registration in the 12 months before being appointed.

Arguments For:

- A regent nominating committee should ensure that nominees will best serve the interests of the particular institution, thereby providing

more accountability in its control and management.

- Since the nominating committee would be nonpartisan, nominees would more likely be best qualified and would not be appointed based on their relationship with the governor or the governing political party.

Arguments Against:

- This amendment would dilute both the governor’s constitutional authority to appoint regents and the senate’s power to advise and consent.
- The Governor and the Senate are directly responsible to voters, whereas a regent nominating committee would not be.

Constitutional Amendment 4

PROPOSING TO AMEND ARTICLE 4, SECTION 10 OF THE CONSTITUTION OF NEW MEXICO TO ALLOW LEGISLATIVE COMPENSATION THAT IS LIMITED TO THE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR NEW MEXICO, TO REQUIRE LEGISLATIVE COMPENSATION TO BE REDUCED IF THE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR NEW MEXICO FALLS, TO ALLOW LEGISLATIVE COMPENSATION TO BE INCREASED ONLY IF THE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME FOR NEW MEXICO RISES AND TO PROVIDE FOR DELAYED IMPLEMENTATION.” For ____ Against ____

Explanation:

Currently, New Mexico state senators and representatives only receive daily limited compensation for mileage and per diem for meals and lodging.

This amendment would allow legislators to receive a salary equal to the median household income for New Mexico, currently approximately \$68,000. This amount could be adjusted by the legislature in the future. The amendment would go into effect in January 2029.

Arguments For:

- A more diverse group of people might run for the legislature if they have less financial pressure to prioritize their other jobs and don’t have to choose between earning a living and public service, giving voters more candidates choices that better represent communities they serve.
- Positions the legislature to serve as a co-equal branch of government with the governor and judicial branches since they will be able to dedicate more time to their duties.
- Legislators work year-round beyond the 30 or 60-day sessions, by serving on interim committees, drawing up legislation, and handling constituent needs.

Arguments Against:

- The salary proposed is higher than many other states, especially considering the number of days the legislature is in session and the poverty level in the state.
- Legislators receiving salaries would have an unfair advantage against opposing candidates who must campaign and raise funds that could require them to lose employment income, while incumbent legislators would be paid while they run for office.
- Paying legislators would add more than \$7 million each year to public spending.

General Obligation Bond Questions

A bond represents money borrowed by a government to finance capital improvement projects. The bonds are called general obligation (GO) bonds because payment of the debt (principal plus interest) is a general obligation of the governmental entity issuing the bond. Voter approval of separate bond questions is a way to get revenue for capital projects. GO bonds must be sold to investors within a specific time after voter approval. They must be fully spent on capital (bricks and mortar) projects or equipment, not on daily operations or maintenance. Bond money cannot be transferred from one category to another. Because old bonds are usually retired as new bonds are approved, the tax rate remains the same. Taxes may increase however if the value of the tax assessment on property increases.

Bond Question 1 – Aging and Long-Term Services Department

The 2026 Capital Projects General Obligation Bond Act authorizes the issuance and sale of senior citizen facility improvement, construction and equipment acquisition bonds. Shall the state be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed twenty-one million five

hundred eighty-two thousand two hundred thirteen dollars (\$21,582,213) to make capital expenditures for certain senior citizen facility improvement, construction and equipment acquisition projects and provide for a general property tax imposition and levy for the payment of principal of, interest on and expenses incurred in connection with the issuance of the bonds and the collection of the tax as permitted by law?

For _____ Against _____

Bond Question 2 – Library Acquisitions

The 2026 Capital Projects General Obligation Bond Act authorizes the issuance and sale of library acquisition bonds. Shall the state be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed nineteen million three hundred twenty-four thousand one hundred eighty-eight dollars (\$19,324,188) to make capital expenditures for academic, public school, public and tribal library resource acquisitions and provide for a general property tax imposition and levy for the payment of principal of, interest on and expenses incurred in connection with the issuance of the bonds and the collection of the tax as permitted by law?

For _____ Against _____

Bond Question 3 – Higher Education

The 2024 Capital Projects General Obligation Bond Act authorizes the issuance and sale of higher education, special schools and tribal schools capital improvement and acquisition bonds. Shall the state be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed three hundred fifty-two million two hundred twenty-five thousand three hundred seventy-nine dollars (\$352,225,379) to make capital expenditures for

certain higher education, special schools and tribal schools capital improvements and acquisitions and provide for a general property tax imposition and levy for the payment of principal of, interest on and expenses incurred in connection with the issuance of the bonds and the collection of the tax as permitted by law?

For _____ Against _____

County Charter Amendments

COUNTY QUESTION No. 1

AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE INCORPORATED COUNTY (COUNTY) OF LOS ALAMOS, PURSUANT TO COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 755, TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF TERMS A PERSON MAY SERVE ON THE SAME STANDING BOARD OR COMMISSION FROM TWO TERMS IN SUCCESSION TO THREE TERMS IN SUCCESSION

Shall Article III, Section 305, Subsection 305.4, of the Charter of the Incorporated County of Los Alamos, relating to Standing Boards and Commissions and Ad Hoc Advisory Committees, be amended to allow a person to serve on the same standing board or commission from no more than two (2) terms to no more than three (3) terms in succession?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Explanation:

Currently all Los Alamos County Boards and Commissions are limited to two terms and require one year off-board before re-applying. The proposed change would permit board members to serve a third consecutive term on the board to which they have previously been appointed if they desire to continue serving.

COUNTY QUESTION No. 2

AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE INCORPORATED COUNTY (COUNTY) OF LOS ALAMOS, PURSUANT TO COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 757, TO AMEND THE POLITICAL PARTY COMPOSITION OF STANDING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Shall Article III, Section 305, Subsection 305.3, of the Charter of the Incorporated County of Los Alamos, relating to Standing Boards and Commissions and Ad Hoc Advisory Committees, be amended to remove the political party composition requirements for all standing Board and Commissions with the exception of the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Public Utilities, and the Personnel Board?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Explanation:

Currently in the Los Alamos County Charter there is a requirement that the composition of a County Board or Commission not exceed a simple majority of members of one political party. The change does not apply to the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Board of Public Utilities, and the Personnel Board, as they are quasi-judicial or operational management boards. In past years, some board and commission positions, especially for the larger boards, have gone unfilled. The proposed change would allow for the appointment of candidates based upon their merits and experience, regardless of political affiliation.

COUNTY QUESTION No. 3

AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE INCORPORATED COUNTY (COUNTY) OF LOS ALAMOS, PURSUANT TO COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 758, TO AMEND THE PRIORITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES (DPU) BUDGETED EXPENDITURES

Shall Article V, Section 509, of the Charter of the Incorporated County of Los Alamos, relating to the priority of the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) budgeted expenditures, be amended to omit the provision for all remaining Department of Public Utilities operating profits to be transferred to the County General Fund?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Explanation:

Municipal utilities like Los Alamos’s cover costs with user fees and charges but do not generate profits. Current provisions require excess amounts to be diverted to the County General Fund. Since 2020, County Councils have transferred these surplus revenues back to the utility funds to be used for infrastructure replacement projects. The proposed amendment in Question #3 would remove the provision requiring these offsetting transfers. It would have little to no net effect on utility rates.

