

LOS ALAMOS

2022 VOTER GUIDE

Featuring:

**Voting Information
Candidates**



The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos is grateful to the Delle Foundation and Enterprise Bank & Trust for making this publication possible

Voter Guide to the 2022 Primary Election

Prepared by the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization for men and women, 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, May 10 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.

Same Day, n-person Voter Registration. The voter must register and vote on the same day in this period. This may be done at all scheduled voting sites.

Tuesday, May 10 thru Friday, May 20 Monday thru Friday, 8 am to 5 pm.

Saturday, May 21 thru Saturday, June 4 Monday thru Saturday, 8 am to 6 pm.

Tuesday, **June 7**, 7 am to 7 pm.

Absentee Voting by Mail

Tuesday, May 10. Absentee ballots will begin to be mailed out.

Registered voters wishing to vote absentee by mail must request an absentee ballot application. Applications can be obtained online at www.NMVOTE.org, in-person at the County Clerk's office, or by mail. Fill them out and return them right away. The last day to request an absentee ballot is **June 2**. Absentee ballots can be dropped off at any scheduled polling place during voting hours or at the County Clerk's office. Absentee ballots must be received at the Clerk's office by **7 pm June 7**.

Early Voting in Person

Tuesday, May 10 thru Friday, May 20 Monday thru Friday 8 am to 5 pm.

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

Early Voting in Person (continued)

Saturday, May 21 thru Saturday, June 4 Monday thru Saturday from 8 am to 6 pm

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

White Rock Town Hall – Training Rooms

Monday, June 6 - Voting is CLOSED

Election Day, Tuesday, June 7. 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

Betty Ehart Senior Center – Downstairs Classroom
University of New Mexico-Los Alamos – Building 6, Room 631

Voting Information

You **must be registered to vote by May 10** (June 7 if using same-day in-person registration) to vote in this election. If you have moved or changed your address or your party affiliation, you should re-register to vote. The County Clerk's office is in the LA County Municipal Building at 1000 Central Ave, Suite 240, 505-662-8010. Application may be made in person, by mail, or online.

For same-day in-person voter registration only, the applicant must appear in person at the County Clerk's office, and immediately before voting shall provide:

- a New Mexico driver's license or New Mexico identification card;
- any document that contains an address in the county together with a photo identification card; or
- a current valid student photo identification card from a post-secondary educational institution in New Mexico accompanied by a current student fee statement that contains the student's address in the county.

For **mail-in registration only**, if the applicant is registering for the first time in New Mexico, he or she must submit a copy of one of the following types of identification showing both the name and the New Mexico address of the applicant:

- a current and valid photo ID such as a driver's license (note that the DMV can issue similar IDs to non-drivers)
- a utility bill
- a bank statement
- a government check, paycheck or other government document.

No identification is required if a voter is merely changing their registration (name, address and/or party affiliation) within the state of New Mexico.

The on-line portal (www.NMVote.org) is only available to those individuals who have been issued a New Mexico Driver's License or Identification Card.

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 one of the above forms of identification. With the exceptions noted above, no physical voter identification is required at the poll.

Sample ballots will be available at the County Clerk's office, at the Mesa Public Library, 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 Early Voting site or Vote Center.

Information Online

The LWVLA Primary Election Voter Guide 2022 is available at www.lwvlosalamos.org. You can also visit the website VOTE411.org for an interactive look at your ballot and all of the candidates' responses.

Local voting information is available on the Los Alamos County Clerk's website at www.losalamosnm.us/clerk.

Candidates' Responses to Questions from the League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos sent questionnaires to all Los Alamos candidates for the 2022 Primary 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 Judy Williams. The editor of the Los Alamos Voter Guide is Lynn Jones, with the help of Akkana Peck, Rosmarie Frederickson, Elizabeth Auden, and Judy Prono. 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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United States Representative, District 3

Candidates must be at least 25 years old, a United States citizen of 7 years, and a resident of New Mexico. The United States House of Representatives has 435 members of which New Mexico is entitled to 3. They serve two-year terms. District 3 includes Los Alamos, Santa Fe, and most of the northern part of the state.

Teresa Leger Fernandez
(Democrat)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED



Alexis Martinez Johnson
(Republican)

1. What skills and knowledge will you bring to the job?

As a mother and an environmental engineer I have firsthand knowledge of both our education system's weaknesses and how the energy industry works. New Mexico's education system is ranked dead last in the United States; we need concerned parents across our state to be more involved in our children's education. We also have one of the most powerful energy sectors in the entire country. We should be utilizing that while upholding reasonable environmental standards. As an environmental engineer, I've upheld those standards, and look forward to doing the same in Congress.

2. What are the three most important issues you plan to work on?

Without a good education system, we can't have a good energy sector. We need STEM students to innovate and tackle our energy challenges headfirst. To improve education, we need to make sure our teachers are focused on teaching vital subjects instead of radical theories. Energy: we have endless untapped potential in New Mexico for clean natural gas and renewable energy. An energy renaissance in New Mexico would lead to a booming economy. Finally, the economy: inflation is too high, and it's because of the tax and spend policies currently running Washington.

3. Should Congress act to mitigate the effects of climate change?

Support

4. If you answered Support, how? If you answered Disagree, why not?

Government has tried and failed to answer the hanging specter of climate change. We need innovative solutions and I believe those solutions will come from the free market system, not the federal government. I support research initiatives that will assist the private sector.

5. What election and voting reforms would you support, if any?

I support free and fair elections. I believe that past voting protocols from the COVID-19 pandemic need to be reviewed thoroughly to see whether or not they are necessary. I support making sure underrepresented communities have access to vote, including early voting. I also believe it is important to ensure everyone is confident in our election results with widely-popular, common-sense reforms, such as Voter ID laws.

6. Do you think our immigration system needs reforming?

Support

7. If you answered Support, what actions would you support?

We have a humanitarian crisis that is continuing to grow worse on our southern border. We need to not only streamline the immigration process but secure our border so that we can limit the large shipments of deadly fentanyl into our country, as well as cut human and sex traffickers off at the knees.

8. What improvements in health care law, if any, would you propose?

We need to use the free market to open up our health care system to competition to get costs down. For far too long, we've let policies that only benefit Big Pharma cronies raise costs for Americans. Competition is also the most effective way to drive down the cost of medications, rather than price controls that will stymie supply while demand stays high.

Governor

The Governor is elected to a four-year term with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years old, a United States citizen, and must have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. The Governor shares the responsibility of administering the state with other elected officials, represents the state nationally and internationally, signs or vetoes statutes enacted by the Legislature, and appoints members of boards and commissions.



Michelle Lujan Grisham
(Democrat)

1. What qualifies you to be governor?

Serving as New Mexico's 32nd Governor has been my greatest honor. I'm proud of what we've delivered for New Mexico and excited about what the future holds for our great state. Prior to serving as New Mexico's Governor, I served three terms in the United State House of Representatives and served the people of New Mexico in a variety of roles at the local and state levels. I'm

running for re-election to build on the progress we've made so that New Mexico can thrive for years to come.

2. What are your three top priorities?

Education, economic prosperity, and public safety. We invested over \$1 billion in New Mexico's schools, increased teacher salaries, achieved universal pre-k, and made tuition-free college a reality. We made New Mexico one of the states for best job growth in the country, and cut taxes for every New Mexican. For the past four years we've worked to make our communities safer by raising officer pay, investing in local law enforcement offices to help them hire and retain officers, and working to address the root causes of crime by combating poverty and improving mental health care access.

3. How would you improve the election laws?

New Mexico already has some of the best run and most secure elections in the country. I championed same day voter registration in New Mexico and I support changes to our election system that would make it easier for every New Mexican to cast their ballot and exercise their right to vote. I will always fight to protect the right of every New Mexican to vote and will always defend our democracy.

4. What actions if any, should be taken at the state level to reduce our use of fossil fuels?

My administration has been leading efforts to make New Mexico a worldwide leader in green energy production. We put in place policies that expand clean energy, lower energy costs, and go after polluters. Earlier this year, New Mexico became home to the largest single-phase wind farm in the country, creating hundreds of good paying jobs. The ambitious goals we've set to reduce our emissions mean that New Mexico is leading the way in fighting climate change and preserving our state's beautiful air, land, and water for future generations.

5. What tax reforms would you support?

One of my most important responsibilities as governor is making sure New Mexicans have what they need to thrive. Earlier this year, I signed legislation that eliminated taxes on social security benefits. I also signed legislation that cut the state's gross receipts tax for the first time in 40 years, saving money for New Mexico small businesses. Last year, I signed legislation that cut taxes for more than half a million families. In response to rising prices, I called a special legislative

session to deliver bipartisan household relief to New Mexican families.

Karen Evette Bedonie
(Libertarian)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Ginger G. Grider (write-in)
(Libertarian)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Jay C. Block
(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Rebecca L. Dow
(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Gregory Joseph Zanetti
(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Ethel R. Maharg
(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED



Mark V. Ronchetti
(Republican)

1. What qualifies you to be governor?

I'm an outsider who will always be on the side of hard-working New Mexicans. If political and government experience made for great leaders, we'd have two of the best in Joe Biden and Michelle Lujan Grisham. That's clearly not the case. New Mexico is an amazing state, but the politicians have let us down. We don't need more political elites – we need leaders with character and integrity who will listen to people, understand their

concerns, and fight tirelessly on their behalf for the change we need. That's what I will do.

2. What are your three top priorities?

My top three priorities are securing the border, fighting crime, and improving our schools. I will secure the border by deploying the National Guard and creating a Border Strike Force to target and disrupt the drug and human trafficking cartels. I will fight crime by ending “catch and release,” supporting our men and women in law enforcement, and ending the current state of lawlessness by putting real teeth in our laws. To improve schools, we will get money directly to the classroom, empower parents, and help catch kids from up the learning losses they suffered from the COVID shutdown.

3. How would you improve the election laws?

We need to make it easy to vote and hard to cheat. It's critical that to any democracy citizens have faith in their elections. That's why I strongly support a Voter ID law that requires voters to show photo identification to cast a ballot. I support early and absentee voting, however I will oppose the practice of automatically sending live ballots to homes without a voter request, as has been proposed by Governor Lujan Grisham. This opens the door to fraud, since 20% of the population moves every election cycle. I will also fight against any effort to legalize ballot-harvesting.

4. What actions if any, should be taken at the state level to reduce our use of fossil fuels?

I am a strong supporter of our oil and natural gas industry and pursue an “all-of-the-above” energy policy. I support the development of renewable energy and other energy sources, like small modular nuclear reactors. But New Mexico oil and gas must continue to play a key role in our energy economy. The governor passed her own Green New Deal in New Mexico and it's led to higher energy costs for New Mexicans and now we are being threatened with rolling blackouts this summer. We are far better off drilling for oil in New Mexico than we are importing it from Iran, Russia, or Saudi Arabia.

5. What tax reforms would you support?

Our complicated and nonsensical tax system hammers small businesses, and punishes working families. MLG inherited the largest budget surplus in history and raised taxes anyways. She has grown government spending by more than TWO BILLION dollars and what do we have to show for it? New Mexico is last in education, #2 in violent crime, and we now have the highest unemployment rate in the country. I will reform our tax system first and foremost by cutting taxes. We will get rid of the double and triple taxing facing our small businesses and allow families to keep more of what they earn.

Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor serves a four-year term with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years old, a United States citizen, and must have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. In the general election, the Governor and Lieutenant Governor are voted on as a slate. The Lieutenant Governor acts as Governor when the Governor is absent from the state and if, for any reason, the Governor is unable to perform his or her duties. Among other duties are serving as the liaison between the people and state agencies, referring citizen complaints and problems to appropriate agencies, and reporting to the Governor. The Lieutenant Governor presides over the Senate and can vote in the event of a tie.

Howie C. Morales
(Democrat)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Travis Steven Sanchez
(Libertarian)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Ant L. Thornton
(Republican)

1. What qualifies you to be Lieutenant Governor?

Two of the constitutional roles of the Lt Governor is to serve as the President of the Senate and as the state Ombudsman. In 2021, I served as a Senate Analyst for the 60 day state legislative session. I know how legislation is made. The key role is to work across the aisle and to trap bad legislation from ever reaching the floor. The second role is to serve as the Ombudsman for the State. The Ombuds serves as a liaison between the public and state agencies. I am a certified member of the IOA (International Ombudsman Association) trained in alternative dispute resolution since 2016.

2. What issues would you like to work on to improve the lives of New Mexicans?

As Lt. Governor, I will focus on four things: Education - focus on universal school choice & vouchers for parents; Enforcing The Border - support building the wall and National Guard supplementing federal border control agents; Election Integrity - prototype Block Chain voting in local elections; Support Law Enforcement - regain Qualified Immunity for law enforcement and advocate for bail reform to stop repeat offenders.

3. How do you see your role as president of the Senate?

The key role is to monitor and trap bad legislation before the legislators convene by working in the sub-committees to improve the language to ensure legislation is Constitutional and doesn't violate individual rights. In addition, I have managed complex, multi-million dollar programs over the course of my career in aerospace engineering at Sandia National Laboratories and Lockheed Martin. I will be the "Go To" person for the Governor to hand off initiatives. If I can handle the development of complex nuclear weapon testing and aircraft systems, I can handle the New Mexico state bureaucracy.



**Peggy L. Muller-Aragon
(Republican)**

1. What qualifies you to be Lieutenant Governor?

I was born and raised in NM dedicating my life to public service. A mother of 3, teacher, VP of APS Board, I've been a forceful advocate for children, families and taxpayers. As APS Board Finance Committee Chair I've seen the crafting of billion dollar budgets, the sale of hundreds of millions of dollars of bonds, and initiated new investment strategies which resulted in millions of dollars of new revenue without raising taxes. I've fought for open meetings, fiscal responsibility, parental rights, school choice, quality curriculum and for reopening schools to in-person learning.

2. What issues would you like to work on to improve the lives of New Mexicans?

Education is an economic driver. Successful students become successful employees, job creators & contributors to a flourishing economy. A failed education system affects public safety, stifles economic growth & keeps business from locating to NM. I'll use my education expertise to work with the Gov. & the Legislature to ensure money follows the child & guarantees our children have the quality education they need to succeed. We must mitigate the damages school closures had on our children, using every initiative we can to address both unfinished learning & our student's social emotional health.

3. How do you see your role as president of the Senate?

The role of any presiding officer is to be fair and impartial. I will work with the Caucus Leaders to ensure openness and transparency in the legislative process. The President of the Senate should adhere to established procedures, but most importantly, maintain the respect, dignity, and decorum of the body.

Secretary of State

The Secretary of State serves a four-year term with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years old, be a citizen of the United States, and have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. The Secretary of State is second in line of succession to the governorship behind the Lieutenant Governor. The Secretary of State attests and affixes the state seal to official documents, maintains the state repository of signed legislation and required filings, is the chief election officer, and generally supervises statewide elections. The Secretary of State is responsible for the registration of corporations, partnerships, lobbyists, trade names, trademarks, and notary public commissions.



**Maggie Toulouse Oliver
(Democrat)**

1. What qualifies you to be Secretary of State?

Experience. I've been an election administrator for over 15 years, serving first as a County Clerk in Bernalillo County and then Secretary of State. As New Mexico's Secretary of State, I served as President of NASS (National Association of Secretaries of State) during the 2020 election, and played a critical role in combating misinformation re: the election's integrity. My record includes administering an election during the height of a pandemic, modernizing New Mexico's registration processes, expanding ballot access, and creating and implementing a more transparent campaign finance system.

2. What would be your top three priorities?

My top priorities include defending democracy, combating dis- and misinformation, and continuing to administer free, fair, and secure elections. I believe the best way to defend democracy is to expand access to the ballot. In other words, as Secretary of State, I believe we should make it easier – not harder – for New Mexicans to vote. I believe my role as Secretary of State is to combat the lies about our elections that ultimately undermine confidence and participation. Lastly, under my administration, New Mexico is a national leader on election – I'd like to build on those successes.

3. What actions, if any, would you take to increase voter participation?

While so many states across the country continue to pursue legislation that restricts access to the ballot, I'm committed to legislation and initiatives that do the opposite. Most recently, I was in the Legislature every day providing expert testimony for a number of Bills that would expand ballot access and modernize New Mexico's elections. I am eager for the opportunity to push these initiatives over the finish line and make them law so more New Mexicans can enjoy equal access to the ballot box.

4. What changes in New Mexico's voting procedures would you support?

I would support changes to New Mexico's voting procedures that address issues related to accessibility, both when registering and casting a ballot. For instance, New Mexico is a rural state, and therefore we should do our best to accommodate the unique needs of our rural voters – whether that is expanding vote by mail periods or opening voting convenience centers.

**Mayna Erika Myers
(Libertarian)**

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

**Audrey Trujillo
(Republican)**

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

Attorney General

The Attorney General serves a four-year term with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States, and must have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. A candidate also must be a licensed attorney of the Supreme Court of New Mexico in good standing. The Attorney General is the state's legal officer, legal counsel to state government, consumer advocate, and guardian of the public interest. Duties include representing the state before courts or agencies when required by the public interest or requested by the Governor, and providing legal opinions upon request of the Legislature, any state official, or any district attorney on a pending subject.



Brian S. Colón
(Democrat)

1. What qualifies you to be Attorney General?

I have been honored to practice widely as an attorney in New Mexico for 20+ years. I've represented individuals, families and small businesses against bad actors and giant corporations. As the State Auditor of New Mexico, I have worked with the Attorney General's Office to hold corrupt public officials and the pharmaceutical sector accountable. I have had the opportunity to see the potential positive impact the office has on communities throughout New Mexico. My

history of legal, public and community service show I am passionate about advocating for those on the margins without a voice.

2. What are your highest priorities for this office?

My top priorities will be: Violent Offenders harming children - I will seek to build a criminal prosecution division full of subject matter experts that will take on the more complicated criminal cases; Environmental Protection - I will ensure that large corporations do not take advantage of New Mexicans by harming our environment and sacred resources such as water; Consumer Protection - I plan on continuing the work of the Attorney General's consumer protection division and making sure that when individuals contact the Office they receive the advocacy every New Mexican deserves.

3. How do you intend to accomplish them?

I intend to accomplish this by ensuring my office's daily priorities include these items and will maintain a dashboard to better track resolution of cases and issues presented. I will dedicate staff and funding to prioritize these three issues. In addition to the internal focus, I will ensure that our external focus prioritizes these three issues. Finally, I will work diligently with our elected legislature, district attorneys, and civic groups to prioritize and advance progress on these issues. By working together, we can ensure that our children, environment and consumers are protected.

4. What will you do to make public officials more accountable to the general public?

When I was running for State Auditor, I made a promise, to ALL New Mexican's, I would hold every elected official accountable. I travelled to all 33 counties with this message of openness and accountability. For nearly four years, I have worked diligently to fulfill this promise. When the Mayor of Las Vegas, who is a Democrat, was abusing her power, I held her accountable for her actions. When Commissioner Couy Griffin, who is a Republican, abused his powers as a County Commissioner when he tried to bill his expenses to take his horses to a Cowboys for Trump Rally, I held him accountable.

5. What will you do to protect New Mexicans from consumer fraud?

This is a nationwide problem, and I will partner with other Attorneys General to take best practices and lessons learned and deploy them in NM. I will also work with the US Attorney and other stakeholders in NM to ensure that at every level, we are working together to ensure our citizens are protected. This issue is personal to me as I grew up in poverty and was the target for fraud committed against our most vulnerable populations. We will further build out a cyber security anti-fraud division team because since the pandemic hit we have seen a sharp increase in consumer fraud at all levels.



Raúl Torrez
(Democrat)

1. What qualifies you to be Attorney General?

Endorsed by US Senator Martin Heinrich, my family's roots in New Mexico go back centuries. I am the only candidate in this race who has prosecuted cases in a courtroom, with almost two decades experience as a prosecutor and was appointed to serve as a senior advisor in President Obama's Department of Justice. As Bernalillo County DA, I have been a national leader for "smart on crime" policies and

using modern tools to solve homicide and rape cold cases. I've taken on extremist militias and big corporations like Facebook and I will continue to fight for you.

2. What are your highest priorities for this office?

The Attorney General safeguards New Mexicans from corruption, abuse, and violence. I was the first prosecutor in the country to sue a heavily armed, right-wing militia to prevent them from policing our streets, and I took action to require Facebook to turn over information about extremists who were recruiting people to engage in criminality. My priorities are to bring my deep experience and a modern approach to prosecuting crime and corruption; and take on predatory corporations and those who target workers, seniors, vulnerable residents, and our environment.

3. How do you intend to accomplish them?

I am the only candidate in this primary election that has prosecuted cases in a courtroom and managed a team of attorneys devoted to putting criminals and corrupters behind bars. I will do the same as your Attorney General.

4. What will you do to make public officials more accountable to the general public?

Accountability starts with the Attorney General's office. That means ending the pay-to-play system currently in place where the AG's office hires big, out-of-state law firms for class action suites, and then receives thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from those same law firms, muddying the water on whose interests are really being served by these out-of-state firms.

5. What will you do to protect New Mexicans from consumer fraud?

I am not afraid to take on big corporations because I've done it before. I took on Facebook and won. I'll do the same in the Attorney General's office and protect our vulnerable populations from predatory corporations

Jeremy Michael Gay
(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

State Auditor

The Auditor serves a four-year term with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years old, a United States citizen, and must have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. The Auditor conducts and oversees audits of the activities of state government officials and entities receiving money from state tax revenue.



Zackary A. Quintero
(Democrat)

1. What qualifies you to be State Auditor?

I bring relevant experience, trust, and a plan to protect our people. I am the only candidate professionally trained in law, investigations, and economics. I am a graduate of both UNM School of Law and NMSU. I just finished serving as the Federal Ombudsman for New Mexico where I was responsible for investigating abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation on

behalf of our seniors, veterans, and adults with disabilities community. The State Auditor's duty to protect our seniors is also personal to me because I saw my grandfather go through a predatory guardianship that stole his VA Benefits.

2. What would be your top three priorities?

1) Establish a dedicated fraud unit that protects our seniors, adults with disabilities, and veterans from predatory guardianships and healthcare scams. This program includes a special prosecutor. 2) Modernize and upgrade the way we track public money by having a dedicated federal and state funds tracker. This system would help detect fraud early and ensure that education funding ends up in the classroom. 3) Create an annual climate accountability audit that reviews the total environmental damage being done by oil and gas polluters and compare it to our

state investments in renewable energy.

3. The State Auditor contracts with independent public accounting firms to audit state agencies. Should these firms be prohibited from making campaign contributions to candidates for State Auditor?

Support

4. Please explain your answer to the above question.

I believe accounting firms that have active investigations or partnerships with the State Auditor should not donate. I also believe the legislature should explore making public financing an option for the race given the nature of the State Auditor's role in investigating corruption, abuse, and fraud across our state. New Mexico needs a State Auditor who can be impartial and connected to the needs of our people. That is why I am proud to be the only candidate supported and endorsed by labor unions, Planned Parenthood, and environmental groups who support keeping dark money out of politics.



**Joseph M. Maestas
(Democrat)**

1. What qualifies you to be State Auditor?

I have 30+ years of experience working for the federal government as a licensed engineer and 14 years as local elected official. As a City Councilor and Mayor of Espanola and a City Councilor in Santa Fe, I carried a fiduciary responsibility for taxpayer dollars. I serve as Chairman of the Public Regulation Commission

representing 400,000+ New Mexicans ensuring utility rates are fair and reasonable, and fighting for access to solar energy and broadband for all New Mexicans. I bring proven leadership and a long, consistent track record of accomplishments making me ready to lead on day one!

2. What would be your top three priorities?

Be the independent watchdog that New Mexicans deserve to protect all public funding by: 1) Creating a score card of key indicators that will surface irregularities quickly to cut down on fraud, waste, and abuse. 2) Auditing Federal infrastructure, education, and capital outlay spending to ensure that funds are spent in an accountable and transparent manner. 3) Cracking down on exploitative adult guardianships by broadening the investigatory authority of the office and providing greater protection of vital public information and critical infrastructure by auditing cyber security funding.

3. The State Auditor contracts with independent public accounting firms to audit state agencies. Should these firms be prohibited from making campaign contributions to candidates for State Auditor?

Support

4. Please explain your answer to the above question.

These pre-approved, independent public accountants (IPAs) also audit all other public entities in addition to State agencies. Candidates for State Auditor (SA) should not receive contributions from IPAs as the SA approves IPAs to engage in audits and also can impose restrictions, including disqualification, depending on their performance. The SA also provides oversight of audit contracts in addition to determining, by rule, how often IPAs must rotate out of existing contracts. This prohibition of campaign contributions to SA candidates protects the integrity of the Office of State Auditor.



**Robert Jason Vaillancourt (write-in)
(Libertarian)**

1. What qualifies you to be State Auditor?

I was born in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I am the former General Manager of several NM Businesses. I am the former State Grassroots Director for a national Nonprofit

organization. I am willing to serve New Mexico and my fellow New Mexicans.

2. What would be your top three priorities?

Waste Fraud Abuse of NM taxpayer dollars. To manage a nonpartisan office, that executes and performs its responsibilities and duties for the State of New Mexico and its residents.

3. The State Auditor contracts with independent public accounting firms to audit state agencies. Should these firms be prohibited from making campaign contributions to candidates for State Auditor?

Disagree

4. Please explain your answer to the above question.

I don't disagree that these firms should not be donating to candidates that could ultimately be offering them state contracts. I'm just a Libertarian, and the idea that we need another law to hold elected officials, and "principled businesses" to a modicum of integrity, disappoints me. I would try to figure out a different course than creating policy for something we all probably agree should not be happening.

State Treasurer

The State Treasurer serves a four-year term, with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years old, a United States citizen, and must have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. The Treasurer receives, pays out, and accounts for receipts and expenditures of all state monies, and invests the balances. Among other duties are providing reports to the State Auditor, the Legislature, and the State Board of Finances.



**Laura M. Montoya
(Democrat)**

1. What financial training and experience qualifies you for this office?

• NM Tax Policy Committee • 2 terms, (8 yrs) as the Elected Sandoval County Treasurer • 23 years of federal, state, tribal and local government • 600+ hours of finance, investment, taxes, economics, pension and management • Certified Public Official (CPO) • Certified Public Manager (CPM) • Certified Treasury Official (CTO) • Vice - Chair

Finance, Pension and Intergovernmental Affairs (7 years) • Chair Next Generation Young Elected Officials (7 years) • BA in Political Science and Psychology with a minor in Sociology; MA in Public Affairs • Rotary Scholar - University of Costa Rica.

2. What are your highest priorities for this office and how do you intend to accomplish them?

• Strengthen transparency and integrity within the State Treasurer's Office • Do a complete internal audit of all processes, contracts and portfolios • Increase outreach in our rural, county, city and tribal communities especially with the Local Government Investment Pool and financial literacy • Review politically appointed positions and see if they have value in the office. • Review the internal budget and determine where we can save taxpayer dollars • Meet with the State Treasurer's Office team and see what ideas they have to increase efficiency, transparency, outreach and integrity.

3. What, if any, changes would you recommend in the policies and operations of the State Treasurer's office?

• An annual review of internal processes with the State Treasurer's Office team to refresh core responsibilities, determine any edits, amendments, and additions based on the current environment. (pandemic, cyber security issues, safety standards, new IT systems, etc) • Analysis on salaries so that those STO team members' job descriptions reflect their daily duties and the pay they should be earning. I will use the \$94,000 from the newly created Chief of Staff position to assist with bringing these salaries to the 21st century. • Work with state agencies and partners on improving communications.



Heather R. Benavidez
(Democrat)

1. What financial training and experience qualifies you for this office?

I am a former municipal and magistrate judge, and currently the chief of staff in the NM State Treasurer's Office, managing twenty-seven employees, in 5 divisions. My tenure in STO started in 2017, and I have nearly 2 decades of professional experience in local and state government, preparing annual budget reports, investment tracking, and financial program management & evaluation. I currently serve on the NM Small Business Investment Corp & Renewable Energy Transmission Authority. Education: B.A., Political Science/Spanish; Master of Public Administration (public finance/management), UNM.

2. What are your highest priorities for this office and how do you intend to accomplish them?

My highest priority is to continue to prudently invest and protect the taxpayer's money, adhering to STO's philosophy of safety, liquidity, and yield. I'll work with our legislature to create a child development savings account plan for every child in New Mexico, accompanying our extensive efforts to assist with financial literacy education. I'll work to offer a tax credit for ABLE NM account contributions, and continue our partnership with CYFD to provide accounts to youth transitioning out of foster care, and implement our NM Work and Save retirement program.

3. What, if any, changes would you recommend in the policies and operations of the State Treasurer's office?

The State Treasurer's Office has a very robust investment policy which includes excellent internal and external controls and standards of care, and a solid commitment for consistent accountability and transparency. I'd like to increase our outreach efforts to rural counties, municipalities, and tribal governments for ABLE NM and the Local Government Investment Pool to provide investment opportunity and savings programs to more New Mexicans. I'd also like to strengthen our financial literacy/consumer protection program to include development of a curriculum for our Native American communities.



Harry B. Montoya
(Republican)

1. What financial training and experience qualifies you for this office?

As a two-term Pojoaque School Board member and two-term Santa Fe County Commissioner, in addition to founding two non-profit organizations, I have spent the majority of my professional and elected official life ensuring financial responsibility is of first and foremost importance. As a

County Commissioner, we function as the Board of Finance and while serving on the Commission, I initiated this obligation to ensure the County was maximizing the investments and return on investments, which allowed us to complete many capital projects during my tenure on the Commission.

2. What are your highest priorities for this office and how do you intend to accomplish them?

The highest priorities for this office is to ensure the safety of the investments, the liquidity of our investments, and maximizing yield for our investments. This includes transparency and accountability in the Treasurers Office and all monies are spent according to the Constitution of the State of NM. I plan to accomplish this by listening to the Citizens of the State of NM. There may be ideas as to how we can accomplish all of the above with the safety, liquidity and yield as the major goal. Citizen participation is important, as well as keeping them informed.

3. What, if any, changes would you recommend in the policies and operations

of the State Treasurer's office?

Changes in the policies and operations of the State Treasurers office may or may not be needed. It is important that I hire individuals who will be able to competently and judicially, perform an analysis of the policies and operations of the Office. If there is a need for change, we will implement those changes. If there is no need for change, as they say, if it isn't broken, don't break it. It is imperative that the analysis be completed prior to making any recommendations for change.

Commissioner of Public Lands

The Commissioner of Public Lands serves a four-year term with no more than two terms in succession. A candidate must be at least 30 years of age, a United States citizen, and must have resided continuously in New Mexico for 5 years preceding his/her election. The Commissioner of Public Lands has jurisdiction, care, and custody of all trust lands. He/she administers state trust land to generate the highest possible level of sustainable revenue for New Mexico's public schools, public institutions of higher learning, and other public institutions.



Stephanie Garcia Richard
(Democrat)

1. What qualifies you to be Commissioner of Public Lands?

Thanks to the trust the voters have placed in me, for the last 4 years, I am proud to say I have raised the most money, closed the most wells & protected more acres

than any previous land commissioner. I've tripled renewable energy production and issued executive orders on freshwater and the Greater Chaco Region, saving millions of gallons of freshwater and protecting over 70,000 acres from future oil and gas development. I've established programs to hold bad actors accountable and ensure remediation and removal of abandoned wells sites, saving New Mexicans millions in cleanup costs.

2. What are the greatest challenges facing the State Land Office?

Diversification is the biggest challenge we face. The billions we raise from oil & gas will not always be here and we need to look to protect our environment and raise money from other sources like: renewable energy, economic development and border commerce.

3. How would you balance responsible stewardship of state trust lands with the need to generate revenues for the support of the beneficiaries?

For the last 4 years that is what we have done! We established the 1st ever comprehensive enforcement and accountability program to hold industry accountable for the use of your public land, closed the most wells of any state agency, protected more acres and saved millions of beneficiary money by making industry clean up their own messes.

4. Should the Land Commissioner improve enforcement of environmental regulations on state trust lands?

Support

5. If you answered agree, how would you do it? If you answered disagree, please explain why not.

We have gone above & beyond any previous land commissioner to enforce environmental regulations. In addition to closing more wells, demanding stricter methane and produced water regulations, and protecting more acres, as well as saving taxpayers from footing the bill and earning more money than any other land commissioner, we have saved New Mexico taxpayers over \$20 million dollars because we are not above taking companies to court when they are not willing to clean up their messes.



Jefferson L. Byrd
(Republican)

1. What qualifies you to be Commissioner of Public Lands?

Jeff's work experience is broad, working as an environmental engineer on a Geoprobe rig installing micro-monitoring wells at a depth of 18 to 20 feet as a geologist and completing site delineation plans of numerous industrial sites from New York to California.

He has installed and completed site remediation systems at various sites around the Southwest. Jeff is also a cattle rancher and works as a wind-miller on his own and neighboring ranchers' wells. Jeff understands the importance of managing land while balancing our State's resources and protecting the environment.

2. What are the greatest challenges facing the State Land Office?

As a steward of the land I have a responsibility to protect and manage our State's land resources for the betterment of our citizens, our environment, and future. We must use our State's resources in an environmentally responsible way.

3. How would you balance responsible stewardship of state trust lands with the need to generate revenues for the support of the beneficiaries?

I would recognize their needs to be a balance between protecting the environment, creating revenue for the State, and ensuring that citizens are best served.

4. Should the Land Commissioner improve enforcement of environmental regulations on state trust lands?

Support

5. If you answered agree, how would you do it? If you answered disagree, please explain why not.

As a PRC commissioner, we have moved to enforce the ETA Environmental Transition Act. I have worked in a bipartisan manner and will continue to do so. My record speaks for itself.

N. M. House of Representatives, District 43

In addition to other duties prescribed by law, the person in this legislative office, together with other representatives, enacts "reasonable and appropriate laws," represents the constituents of his or her district, and serves on standing or interim committees. The legislature meets each year beginning in January. In odd-numbered years, it meets for 60 days; in even-numbered years, it meets for 30 days. The Governor may call special sessions. Candidates must be at least 21 years old and must be a resident of the district from which elected. They serve a two-year term. The 43rd District includes Los Alamos and parts of Sandoval and Santa Fe Counties.



Christine Chandler
(Democrat)

1. What is the biggest problem facing New Mexico in the next two years? How can it be addressed legislatively?

One of the biggest challenges facing New Mexico is expanding high speed internet service across the state.

Too many New Mexicans in both rural and urban communities lack access to reliable service. This significantly impedes educational achievement, job training, telemedicine and limits the state's ability to diversify its economy. Progress is being made through recent legislative initiatives; however, a full scale offensive is needed to tackle the problem on all fronts.

2. What actions do you advocate to improve the availability, accessibility, and quality of health care for New Mexicans?

The state has been making incremental progress in expanding access to health care. A large portion of the state's residents receive care through Medicaid, in addition, the executive and legislature have worked cooperatively to increase access to affordable insurance through the health care exchange, and has enacted laws to lower the cost of prescription drugs - for example, by authorizing the state to import Canadian prescription drugs, through legislation limiting insulin co-pay.

3. What steps, if any, should the legislature take to help combat climate change?

Climate change must be tackled on many levels: increased and on-going support for renewable energy expansion, including large scale battery development, improved and stronger environmental regulatory measures, such as the state's strong methane rule, the enactment of clean fuel standards and the diversification of the state's economy to help us move away from oil and gas production.

4. What, if anything, should be changed to make the legislative process more transparent? For example, could improvements be made in scheduling bills in committees, or in how floor sessions are run, or anything else?

The New Mexico House has adopted many measures, such as early posting of committee agendas and bill analyses, public participation in committee hearings via Zoom as well as live public comment, public access to capital outlay and supplemental (junior) budget expenditures. An area where improvement is needed is better transparency in the use of so-called generic (or "dummy") bills.

New Mexico State Judicial Offices

Vacancies for courts in New Mexico are filled through appointment by the governor from a slate of potential nominees submitted by a judicial nominating committee. The newly appointed judge must then run in a contested, partisan election at the next general election. Thereafter, the judge runs in nonpartisan retention elections for set terms. In a partisan election, the candidate receiving the most votes will be elected. To be retained, a judge must receive at least 57% "yes" votes out of all those cast for that office. The website of the Judicial Performance Evaluation Committee, www.nmjpec.org, includes evaluations and information about retention candidates.

Justice of the Supreme Court

The five Supreme Court justices are elected by all voters in the state and serve eight-year terms. To be eligible to hold the office of Justice of the Supreme Court, a person must be 35 years old, have practiced law for at least 10 years, and have resided in New Mexico for the last 3 years. The Supreme Court serves as the administrative head of the New Mexico judicial branch of government. It is the "court of last resort" for state appellate actions, regulates attorneys and judges, and has superintending control over all lower state courts. It has jurisdiction over civil cases where jurisdiction is not specifically vested in the state Court of Appeals, appeals from criminal cases imposing the death penalty or life imprisonment, appeals from decisions of the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission, certiorari review of state Court of Appeals decisions, and cases certified to it by the state Court of Appeals or any federal court.



N.M. Justice of the Supreme Court
Position 1 - Partisan

Julie J. Vargas
(Democrat)

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission? Yes or No

Yes. I was endorsed by the Bi-Partisan Judicial Nominating Commission in November 2020 for the position

I currently hold and appointed by the Governor

2. What qualifies you for this position?

Serving on New Mexico's two highest courts, along with my over two decades in private practice helping New Mexican families and small businesses. As a judge, I have authored more than 125 opinions and decided hundreds of other cases in all areas of the law. While in private practice, I co-chaired the State Bar's Ethics Advisory Committee and now serve as the Supreme Court's liaison to the Disciplinary Board. I previously served as Co-Chair of the Advisory Opinions Committee, dedicated to advising judges on their responsibilities under the Code of Judicial Conduct.

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

Public financing of judicial races is the most important policy necessary to retain judicial independence and deter political influence. In 2021, the Legislature expanded public financing to all district court races. NM is the only state that provides public financing for both statewide and district court judicial races. Public financing alleviates concerns that a judge's decision was influenced by a large campaign contribution and promotes public trust in our judicial system. For that reason, I've applied for and secured public financing in my efforts to retain my seat on the Supreme Court.

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

Access and transparency. Expanding virtual hearings is cost effective, increases access, saves money for citizens, and increases legal service options to under-represented communities. Virtual hearings reduce the time parties have to take off work to attend and eliminate transportation and childcare issues. Allowing unrepresented parties to e-file pleadings also expands access. Live-streaming Supreme Court oral arguments increases transparency, as the public can see our work. Expanding our outreach to NM's schools teaches students about the role of the courts and the rule of law in our society.



Thomas C. Montoya
(Republican)

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission? Yes or No

I have been endorsed three (3) times by the Judicial Nominating Commission for District Court Judge. I did not apply to the Commission this time.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

40 years of practice in all NM trial and appellate courts. J.D. U.S.C. "A" preeminent rating from Martindale-Hubbell Peer Review Ratings. Cited as authority in 3 appellate cases. 20+ years member prestigious American Law Institute. Co-Chair of Child Support Guidelines Commission which promulgated New Mexico's statutory Child Support Guidelines. Chair of Rules Committee of the N.M. Supreme Court, which promulgated statewide rules of procedure for domestic relations and domestic violence cases. Selected as qualified to be District Court Judge by Judicial Nominating Commission. NM native.

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

A judge must place the law above any other consideration in deciding a case. A judge cannot, in the performance of judicial duties, by words or

conduct, manifest bias or prejudice, or engage in harassment, including but not limited to bias, prejudice, or harassment based upon race, religion, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, spousal affiliation, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, age, physical or mental handicap or serious medical condition, nor permit others subject to the judge's direction or control to do so.

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

Because the Supreme Court is the rule-making body governing all courts, attention must be paid to adherence to the Constitution and the rule of law throughout the state. Cases cannot be decided because of a desired outcome, but only on the law and facts of the case. Judges must decide on what the law is, and not what the law should be, in the opinion of the judge. There can be no respect of persons before the law, resulting in a different decision based upon the person or company which appears before the court. All persons are required to be equal before the law, regardless of rich or poor.

N.M. Justice of the Supreme Court Position 2 - Partisan



Briana H. Zamora
(Democrat)

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission? Yes or No

Yes, I was recommended by the Bi-Partisan Judicial Nominating Commission for this position and appointed by the Governor.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

I serve as a Supreme Court Justice, in this position, with well-rounded legal experience having litigated civil, criminal and children's court cases throughout the State of New Mexico. More significantly, the experience I gained as a trial and appellate court judge is invaluable. I have served at every level of the judiciary and presided in thousands of cases, over 100 jury trials and every type of criminal proceeding. I have in-depth knowledge of our criminal justice system. Additionally, as an appellate court judge I issued opinions in every area of the law.

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

As Judges, we must adhere to our oath of office and strict ethical rules, which requires judges to decide cases without regard to political or private interests and regardless of public opinion. We are required to follow the law and Constitution. Ethical rules also require that we not state our opinions on political issues. It is also critical that our state has public financing for our appellate and district judicial races to ensure that our campaigns are not funded with large contributions from private sources. That is why I've applied for and received public financing to run my campaign.

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

The Supreme Court is a respected and well-oiled machine that has been following well-established protocols for decades. However, I do believe upgraded technology, including an updated case management system would result in more efficiencies. Increasing access to justice for our rural communities, continuing our efforts to better collaborate with our justice partners to improve our criminal justice system, and efforts such as our new Statewide Judicial Commission on Mental Health will ensure we continue to meet the needs of our residents who come into contact with the judicial system.

**Kerry J. Morris
(Republican)**

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission? Yes or No
No.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

I've been practicing law for over 40 years. I am a problem solver, not a part of the elite legal establishment with vested interests in furthering progressive political agendas. I represent the working people of New Mexico; they include families who've experienced tragedy, people who've been treated unfairly, and people who are victims of crime. I understand the problems of working people and small business owners who have lost jobs, their businesses due to government shutdowns. I will bring to the Supreme Court the balance of an outsider, a constitutionalist who strictly interprets the law.

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

Increase judicial pay and make funding of the courts independent of the politics of legislature and the governor by indexing them to the pay rate for federal judges. The governor just vetoed a pay raise for the judges that would have done this. She did this without explanation leaving us to speculate as to her reasons. She vetoed the pay raise even though the court ruled in her favor on all of her Covid decrees. Perhaps the Governor was unhappy with the recent ruling by the court on who gets to spend the federal money. Clearly, she was sending a political message to the Supreme Court.

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

The Supreme Court will be improved with my election to the Court through a better balance of judicial philosophies. As the Albuquerque Journal stated when it endorsed me for the Supreme Court in 2020, "Morris, as a Republican, offers the Supreme Court some needed diversity in philosophy and thinking. The political balance of the court has historically been to the left, and the pending retirement of the Supreme Court's only Republican, Judith Nakamura, makes balancing the court with a new Republican that much more important." Albuquerque Journal October 15, 2020

Judge of the Court of Appeals

The 10 judges on the Court of Appeals are elected statewide and serve 8-year terms. Eligibility requirements: a person must be 35 years old, have practiced law for at least 10 years, and have resided in New Mexico for the last 3 years. As the intermediate appellate court between the district courts and the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals reviews appeals in all cases, except criminal cases involving sentences of death or life imprisonment, appeals from the Public Regulation Commission, and cases involving habeas corpus. The judges sit in panels of three judges to decide cases.

N.M. Judge of the Court of Appeals Position 1 - Partisan



**Gerald Edward Baca
(Democrat)**

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission?

I was recommended by the Bi-Partisan Judicial Nominating Commission and interviewed, vetted, and appointed by the Governor for this position on the NM Court of Appeals.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

I have over 34 years of experience as a practicing attorney and judge in my home state of New Mexico. My experience is in nearly every area of law that comes before the courts of New Mexico. I served as a district judge for over 9 years and I currently serve as a judge on the Court of Appeals, having been appointed in April 2021. Before becoming a judge, I served as a prosecutor in the First and Fourth Judicial Districts. In my practice, I was a criminal defense attorney and I handled a wide variety of civil cases from divorces and auto accident cases to complex wrongful death cases.

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

First and foremost, the judiciary must remain independent from any influence, political or otherwise. I believe the current Canons of Judicial Conduct sufficiently set forth the expected conduct of a judicial candidate in a partisan election. However, I think the requirements to qualify for public financing for judicial campaigns should be adjusted. Instead of having our committees collect over 1,300 \$5 contributions, a different threshold should be required in order to take money completely out of the process.

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

In New Mexico, every litigant is entitled to one appeal. The great majority of those appeals are heard by the Court of Appeals (COA). As a result, the COA has hundreds of cases on its docket. Each of these cases takes time to review and decide. Thus, the COA is a very busy court. The COA is working hard to resolve these appeals in a timely manner. However, the judges at the COA are acutely aware of the need to get these appeals resolved more quickly. Thus, the COA, myself included, is constantly looking at ways to more efficiently and expeditiously decide these appeals.



**Sophie I. Cooper (write-in)
(Libertarian)**

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission?

no

2. What qualifies you for this position?

Strong academic and legal background: 1973 BA economics, University of Chicago; 1989, JD, Washington College of Law (American University), 4th highest in class. Employed as a Public Defender for 30 years. Strong person: morally, spiritually, mentally, and physically. Good understanding of the cultures and values of New Mexicans. I've lived here 45 years; participated in Native American ceremonies; traveled extensively through Navajo-land; currently employed at the Pueblo of Isleta.; and Jewish. A good mix of cultures.

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

Mainly, the judiciary needs to do its job and protect our constitutional rights from government. How quickly we, the people, lost our freedom to a virus. I don't understand "emergency powers" that continued over two years. The Governor used a Riot Control Act designed to control riots to lock-down Gallup; she closed the churches entirely the night before Easter 2020; she told us what to wear and how many people we can have in our homes, and the Courts did nothing. Our rights are embodied in our federal and state constitution and the Court needs to protect the people from abuse of power.

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

Speedier resolution of cases. More backbone to stand up and enforce the constitution against the other branches of government.



Barbara V. Johnson
(Republican)

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission?

Yes, for a District Court Judgeship. However, I was not appointed by the Governor.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

I have been a Family Lawyer since 1988. Family law involves everything that touches the lives of our citizens. Some of those kinds of cases are divorces, custody and time sharing, child support, peoples' houses and personal belongings, at times domestic violence, crimes, business matters, estate planning and retirement plans. Family law can be very challenging, but is also very rewarding. The Court of Appeals hears cases that someone believes a trial judge decided incorrectly. Being a Family Lawyer both in and out of the Courtroom on a variety of cases is a great background/foundation.

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

The Judiciary is an equal branch of our government. Each branch has different responsibilities. Our Courts are responsible for following the law when deciding a dispute. Every case has facts relating to that case. Judges must not make those decisions based on outside influences. Judges should not create law as the legislative branch of government is responsible for that. Judges are to apply and follow the rule of law. When the voters learn about candidates, they should vote for the one that fills the job description.

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

Our citizens deserve more expedient decisions from the Court. The litigants' lives are often on hold for years while their case in the Court winds its way through the complicated system of an appeal. The job is to determine whether a case was decided correctly and if not to reverse it, and send it back with instructions and explanations that give citizens and judges guidance. If the case was decided correctly, it should be affirmed quickly so that the litigants can move forward with their lives. Hopefully, I can assist with streamlining the process and working for all our citizens.

N.M. Judge of the Court of Appeals Position 2 - Partisan



Katherine Anne Wray
(Democrat)

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission?

Yes, the Bi-Partisan Judicial Nominating Commission determined I was qualified and recommended me to the Governor for an extensive interview, and she appointed

me to this position.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

I have worked and practiced in the district and appellate courts for nearly fifteen

years. I first served as a law clerk for an appellate and a district court judge. In private practice, I worked simultaneously as a criminal staff attorney, trial counsel in complex civil cases, and an appellate attorney. My practice focused on legal writing and analysis, as well as civil and appellate procedure. I served multiple terms on the New Mexico Supreme Court's Appellate Rules Committee and the Code of Professional Conduct Committee, and I was privileged to teach legal writing at UNM School of Law.

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

Many policies protect judicial independence. The Code of Judicial Conduct requires judges to maintain independence, integrity, and impartiality, whether campaigning or applying the law. District court judges' decisions are subject to one automatic review and the Court of Appeals' decisions may also be further evaluated by the New Mexico Supreme Court. The Judicial Standards Commission reviews a judge's professional conduct and assists the public to decide whether to retain the judge. The judge, though, must recognize her own biases, adhere to the law, and disregard political influences.

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

The Court of Appeals is responsible for reviewing almost all cases appealed in New Mexico, involving nearly every area of the law. Because we are a such a busy, the biggest need is to move cases through the system so that appeals are timely heard and parties get the resolution they need. Since joining the Court, I've utilized my appellate, trial, civil, and criminal experience to work with my colleagues to be an active and productive addition to the Court. I have focused on learning quickly, carefully reviewing cases, and keeping in mind the parties who are waiting for decisions.

Stephen P. Curtis
(Libertarian)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED



Gertrude Lee
(Republican)

1. Have you been endorsed by the Judicial Nominating Commission?

No, I have not. I have been endorsed by the Albuquerque Police Officers' Association. When I ran for Court of Appeals in 2020 I was endorsed by the Albuquerque Journal.

2. What qualifies you for this position?

My experience as a manager and trial attorney has prepared me to serve on the Court of Appeals. For twelve years I have worked as a trial attorney and prosecutor. In Gallup, I represented the State in numerous jury and bench trials in the Magistrate and District Courts. I also filed several appeals on behalf of the State. I continue my work as a prosecutor in Farmington. I also served as the Chief Prosecutor of the Navajo Nation where I managed ten prosecutor offices and several dozen staff across the reservation in addition to practicing in the tribal courts.

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

It is absolutely essential for a judge to be impartial and to maintain the rule of law. This means judges should be open minded, unbiased, remain impartial and non-partisan when rendering decisions.

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

I believe bringing balance to the Court would be an improvement. The Court could use an addition who has significant experience practicing in rural New Mexico and tribal courts. My addition to the bench would add a completely different voice to the Court of Appeals. I was born in Shiprock and grew up outside Farmington. I am a member of the Navajo Nation (my clan is Near to Water born for Big Water). I have practiced law in rural New Mexico my entire career and I have experience in tribal court. Because of my work in public safety, I also appreciate the criminal law issues New Mexicans face.

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
(Democrat)**

1. Describe your qualifications and pertinent experiences that have prepared you to be Magistrate Judge.

I've been an attorney for more than 20 years. I am currently the Teen Court Coordinator for Los Alamos Municipal Court and VP of the New Mexico Teen Court Association. I attended a week-long training for aspiring judges at the National Judicial College in October of last year. I worked

as a Deputy Trial Counsel for the California State Bar, prosecuting California-licensed attorneys for ethics and code of conduct violations. As a Deputy District Attorney, I prosecuted felonies and misdemeanors.

2. What factors should be considered 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.



**Tim Bullock
(Republican)**

1. Describe your qualifications and pertinent experiences that have prepared you to be Magistrate Judge.

I have practiced law for decades in three states and have served both as a prosecutor and as a member of the criminal defense bar. I have the ability to apply the law to the facts and to understand how a judicial decision will affect individuals appearing before the court.

My ability to communicate with counsel, jurors, witnesses and parties calmly and courteously, as well as my willingness to listen and develop my decisions based upon reasoned analysis qualify me for this position.

2. What factors should be considered in determining the appropriate sentence for an offender?

Factors which will affect my sentencing include: a defendant's prior criminal record; their age and sophistication; the circumstances under which their crime was committed; the defendant's state of mind during commission of the crime; their likelihood of recidivism, and; whether the defendant genuinely feels remorse. Where the law allows judicial discretion, I will show compassion but hold them accountable.

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 2022 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.



**Melanee M. Hand
(Democrat)**

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

I support the Council Priority Goal to "Protect Our Environment and Improve our Open Spaces, Recreational, and Cultural Amenities". This includes

compliance with all environmental laws, support of the initiatives from the Environmental Sustainability Board, LARES initiatives and actions, and resource conservation and preservation. I support waste reduction initiatives, and smart/controlled use of pesticides to protect human and animal health. Thumbs-up: Clean-up LA initiative trash collection.

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

I support code enforcement and business development assistance programs on a case-by-case basis when appropriate (see County Council Regular Session on 2/1/22, item 15404-22). In some instances, when there are multiple owners of properties in blighted areas, the County could potentially purchase a group of properties from various owners in order to revitalize it for County development priorities and needs, especially if County infrastructure is needed to revitalize.

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

The County has approved Comprehensive Long Range Plans for development that involved significant stakeholder input and vetting, and resulting approvals through County Council. I support a formal planning process, development of recommendations, and implementation strategies tied to realistic budget items. Approved plans that consider complexities and multi-faceted aspects for housing locations should be followed. Interrelationships with other plans should be considered.



Suzie Havemann
(Democrat)

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

I believe in Think Globally, Act Locally. I support efforts to invest in climate change solutions that ensure environmental protection and resiliency. Protecting our natural environment and open space are key to our quality of life and economic vitality. I support many recommendations from the RES Task Force including a Sustainability Coordinator to ensure we meet net-zero carbon goals. We should hold the County accountable to ensure sustainability is considered in its planning and actions.

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

This is a challenge we all care about, for both downtown and White Rock. We need to be in constant dialogue with property owners and our business community to ensure we understand the obstacles they face. We need to support infrastructure improvements, building code revisions, workforce development and innovative ways to attract small businesses with move-in ready spaces. The County should act with more urgency to leverage economic development resources and tools to assist local business.

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

We have an acute housing shortage. To solve this, all options should be considered. LANL is most impacted by our shortage; DOE should continue as part of the solution with land transfers. There are areas around town ideal for mixed use infill with higher density. Continued partnerships with LAPS will enable North Mesa and prior school sites for housing. DP Road and Longview in White Rock are viable. We need code changes for higher density and more than one dwelling on a single lot, as examples.



Theresa A. Cull
(Democrat)

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

Open space preservation and protection is my top environmental goal. Our surrounding forests and open areas are a unique aspect of living in Los Alamos. To preserve this environment, we need to ensure fire and disease prevention measures for our local forests and provide home and business owners with information about landscaping and protective spaces around their properties. We will need to monitor our water usage and support efforts for sustainable growth in a warmer, dryer climate.

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

I need to become familiar with what has been done so far and/or what is being planned to address this ongoing problem. I would work with land and building owners to understand their needs and consider incentives, if possible, to encourage occupancy of vacant buildings. There have been recent articles showing a desire for the movie theater. I would explore options (maybe a public/private partnership or a co-op?) to bring this service back to the community.

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

Prior to my retirement at LANL, I hired a large number of technicians to support the Laboratory's expanding mission. Since at least half of these new-hires were not local, housing was a significant issue. I expect some relief from the housing underway in Los Alamos, but what appears lacking is single family homes. The planned housing on North Mesa may help. We should also explore housing development off the hill and possibly consider increased density in some Los Alamos community areas.



Randall T. Ryt
(Democrat)

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

Protecting and improving our environment is one my priorities for a second term. Progress in this area requires that we better define impacts of County actions, establish policies regarding development or redevelopment, and requirements for new construction. The County is in a unique position because we manage a department of public utilities. We can make investments in infrastructure for long term efficiency and resiliency for electric generation and distribution.

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

Council has adopted downtown plans and we are currently updating the development code, which are good first steps. However, revitalizing our downtowns is challenging due to legal and market constraints. New initiatives related to redevelopment authority that the County possesses should be evaluated. We have opportunities with the Metropolitan Redevelopment Area (MRA) in White Rock or partnerships with local businesses using the Local Economic Development Act (LEDA).

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

I am in favor of protecting open space identified in the Comprehensive Plan and not developing it. The downtown plans identify some areas for mixed use or other infill locations that could be redeveloped to include housing. There are County owned parcels (see the April 5, 2022 Council meeting presentation) and privately owned lands that could be developed for housing, and be consistent with current zoning and the future land use map in the Comprehensive Plan.



James Curtis Wernicke Jr.
(Libertarian)

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

Consume less, reduce waste, and involve community stakeholders in environmental rehabilitation and maintenance. Sponsor training of volunteer trail crews and environmental awareness campaigns. Increase pressure on the lab to clean up its contamination in and around Los Alamos.

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

Revise county zoning plans to allow development of ground-floor commercial

spaces with multi-story residential on top of those buildings. This would create affordable housing close to businesses, reduce commuter traffic, increase mass transit use, attract a diverse workforce, and create a socially vibrant downtown. Stop renting these spaces to the lab so that local businesses can afford them. Eliminate horrifically expensive building codes so that businesses can get off the ground.

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

Any surplus County land should be considered for auction to the highest bidder. Allow developers to build what the market demands. Allow multi-story residential above commercial properties. Allow homeowners to build “in-law” apartments or other small housing units on their property.

**Sharon L. Dry
(Republican)**

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

I believe one of the most critical environmental goals for Los Alamos County is remediation of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Legacy Waste and contamination cleanup on County lands. The County Council should continue working with LANL and hold them accountable through accelerated completion of these projects (in accordance to the Consent Order with the New Mexico Environment Department and DOE, as they are responsible for clearing the contamination from our community.)

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

I would encourage the County Council and staff to reduce obstacles that may hinder the development, sale or transfer of the buildings by having the County staff facilitate a ready path for a purchaser to easily obtain ownership. Council should encourage a more aggressive and productive negotiation with Kroger for the disposition of the old Smith’s.

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

The Longview area of White Rock could be utilized for housing, perhaps as senior housing, which could be a good fit for the existing “Bee Hive Homes of White Rock”, assisted living center. I believe it would need to be rezoned for residential property. In cooperation with the Los Alamos Public Schools and the County, I support the development of single-family homes or townhouses on North Mesa on land located near the middle school.

**Reginald Thomas Page Jr.
(Republican)**

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED



**Gary Lane Stradling
(Republican)**

1. What environmental goals or policies, if any, would you champion as councilor?

Our stewardship of the earth is important. We live here and our children will continue to live here. We love to garden, to enjoy the NM environment. Climate science

shows continual change over millions of years, with minor human impacts. As careful stewards, we must balance the costs of our sacrifices with real climate benefits. I will not penalize citizens to serve distant ideals, but will seek meaningful effect, in the presence of comparable sacrifices by LANL, industry, and agriculture.

2. Some parts of our downtown are empty or poorly used. Since this is private land, how can the County address this problem?

Local businesses serve the community: shopping, services, or employment. The County has the role of facilitating, inviting, and cultivating local businesses, like a gardener does a garden. We should not be a barrier. We plan, zone, and permit to ensure that good activities are enabled for particular areas. We must work to make an inviting business environment, and to stimulate land owners to use their properties in the interests of the citizens. Sometimes, that includes legal condemnation.

3. New housing is planned or under construction on several sites in Los Alamos and on the north side of Rte. 4 in White Rock. What other areas in the County, if any, do you think should be considered for housing?

Thousands of people commute here daily. We need housing for them, and for others we need to come work here. Los Alamos has always been landlocked. We have land in the county that is not being well used. The town is surrounded by millions of acres of undeveloped land. In the past, we have been able to persuade federal landholders to transfer land to the County, including in cooperation with our neighbors. I know Washington, and will work to make more land available for housing for our workers.

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.”



**Jason Wardlow-Herrera
(Democrat)**

1. What do you see as the major function of the Sheriff’s office in Los Alamos County?

The Sheriff of Los Alamos County only has one duty, the sheriff is responsible for maintaining the sex offender registry. The sheriff is responsible for updating the sex offender database, updating their flyers throughout the county and conducting unannounced home inspections of offenders to ensure they are abiding by state law and our local ordinances.

2. What should be the interaction between the county Sheriff’s department and the Police department?

The interaction between the sheriff and police department is critical to the success of the sheriff’s department. The Los Alamos County Sheriff is an administrative sheriff, meaning his/her authority is not the same as any other sheriff or police officer in the state of New Mexico. Therefore, the assistance and cooperation of these two organizations is imperative for the sheriff’s department role in Los Alamos County.



**Chris Luchini
(Libertarian)**

1. What do you see as the major function of the Sheriff’s office in Los Alamos County?

Exactly the statutory duties in the County Charter and the NM State Constitution: Maintaining the Sex Offend-

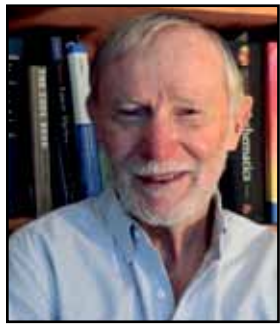
er Registry, and optionally, removing the burden of service of process from the LA Police Department.

2. What should be the interaction between the county Sheriff's department and the Police department?

The Sex Offender Registry needs to be updated quarterly, or when a new registration is required. Ideally the Sheriff and Police Department would coordinate these notifications and ensure that there are no gaps in the registration process. For Service of Process, the Sheriff should personally conduct these duties, unless the person being served has a history of violence. In that case, either the Police Department should provide an uniformed officer to assist, or take over that service.

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.



George Chandler
(Democrat)

1. What would be your priorities as County Assessor?

My priorities will be to monitor operations of the office and ensure that policies and procedures are kept up to date, that the staff maintains qualifications and is adequately compensated, that contingencies are provided for, and that succession plans are in place for key personnel. I will seek public input and ways we can improve

our operations, and serve as the point of contact with the County Council and the Property Tax Division of the Department of Taxation and Revenue.

2. How do you plan to maintain fairness and transparency in property valuations?

I will monitor the data collected and evaluations done, and use statistical tools to ensure equity across property classes. The data collected by the office is open to public scrutiny by law and I will continue current in-person and on-line access, while looking for opportunities to improve. Public outreach and education are necessary for the success of these programs. I will monitor complaints and appeals, and due process. The best guarantee of fairness is a competent, well-trained staff.

Laura Burrows
(Libertarian)

1. What would be your priorities as County Assessor?

The Assessors Office will likely be quite busy for the upcoming term, with all the new housing being planned and built in the county. Insuring that the valuations for new and upgraded housing are free from conflict of interest, and as fair as possible is the prime duty of the assessor. Additionally, outreach and education to inform those property owners of property tax relief that they are due should become an ongoing effort.

2. How do you plan to maintain fairness and transparency in property valuations?

I have no connection to the construction, development, or remodeling contractors. I will not accept any campaign contributions from any source. While in office, all decisions and appeals of valuation will be as transparent and open as the law allows. Initial review of appeals will be double blind, where possible, to prevent even the appearance of bias. A systematic review of the way valuations are set, and the review process, will a first priority.

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.



Michael D. Redondo
(Democrat)

1. What in your experience qualifies you for the office of Probate Judge?

I have served as the Probate Judge since June of 2019. I have participated in all of the Probate Judge training sessions offered by the New Mexico Judicial Education Center since that date. Prior to serving as Probate Judge I served two full

terms on the Los Alamos County Planning and Zoning Commission including serving part of my second term as chair of the commission.

2. What are the most important functions of the Probate Judge?

The Probate Judge reviews applications for informal probate of wills and intestate estates and appoints Personal Representatives and Special Administrators to manage and settle a deceased person's estate. Additionally, a Probate Judge may perform marriages within the county. While the Judge is not required to conduct marriages I am committed to providing this important service to the entire community.

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
(Democrat)

1. Describe your qualifications and pertinent experiences that have prepared you to be a Municipal Judge.

After working for a decade as a prosecutor and defense attorney, it has been a pleasure to serve as the Los Alamos Municipal Judge since 2019. I have been able to use my legal experience to conduct a court that ensures legal access,

due process rights and fair hearings. I have been appointed as the President of the Municipal Judge Association, a trainer and mentor for judges and a member of the NM Judicial Council which allows insight into issues facing the judiciary statewide.

2. How do you see the role of Municipal Judge in Los Alamos County?

The Municipal Judge represents the judicial branch within our city/county government. The Judge's role is that of impartiality and fairness. The duty of the judge is to ensure that Constitutional rights are protected, whether it is a simple traffic ticket or a more serious crime. This includes providing online court options during a pandemic, interpretation services and first-rate customer service for those that are required to appear in court.