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Local Candidates**

**League Of Women Voters ®**



**Los Alamos  
Primary Voter  
Guide 2026**

**The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos is grateful to the following business and community contributors who made this publication possible:**

- The Delle Foundation**
- 100 Men Who Care**
- American Association of University Women (AAUW)**

## Los Alamos Voter Guide 2026 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 5:** Applications must be received by 5 pm at the County Clerk's office in the Los Alamos County Municipal Building or on-line through the NM Secretary of State Portal (NMVote.org) by 11:59 p.m. **This is the final date you can change your affiliation from one major party to another.**

#### Same Day, In-person Voter Registration

**Tuesday, May 5 thru Tuesday, June 2:** Register and vote on the same day during this period at any open polling place.

#### Absentee Voting by Mail

**Tuesday, May 5: Absentee ballots will begin to be mailed out.**

Registered voters wishing to vote absentee by mail must request an absentee ballot application by **May 19**. You can request your absentee ballot application in person, download a mailable form from the Clerk's website, or apply online at NMVote.org. It is recommended that your Absentee ballot be mailed by May 26. You can also return it in person at any polling place during voting hours, at the County Clerk's office, or at one of the Drop Boxes. Absentee ballots must be received at the Clerk's office by 7 pm June 2.

#### Early Voting in Person

**Tuesday, May 5 thru Friday, May 15: Monday thru Friday** 8 am to 5 pm.

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

#### Early Voting in Person (continued)

**Saturday, May 16 thru Saturday, May 30:** Monday thru Saturday from 8 am to 6 pm.

Los Alamos County Municipal Building - Council Chambers

White Rock Town Hall – Training Rooms

#### Monday, June 1 - Voting is CLOSED

**Election Day, Tuesday, June 2.** 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 2, Room 230

### Voting Information

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

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

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

#### Information Online

The LWVLA Primary Election Voter Guide 2026 is available at [www.lwvlosalamos.org](http://www.lwvlosalamos.org). You can also visit the website [VOTE411.org](http://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.gov/clerk](http://www.losalamosnm.gov/clerk).

### Candidate 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 2026 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 Edwina Jaramillo and assistant Mark Coomes. The editor of the Los Alamos Voter Guide is Cynthia Biddlecomb, with the help of Lynn Jones, Susannah Rousculp, Marianne Wilkerson, and Akkana Peck. Jean Dewart and her "Questions Committee" were essential. Thank you also to the United States League of Women Voters for the support of our on-line Voter Guide at [VOTE411.org](http://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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## Who Can Vote In The Primary In 2026?

### LWV News:

This year for the first time New Mexico will have a semi-open primary. The state of New Mexico recognizes only four political parties for the purposes of primary elections: Republican, Democratic, Libertarian, and Green. A person who listed any other party name, did not specify a party, or wrote Declined to State (DTS), is considered to be DTS for the purpose of the primary election. Those considered as DTS can participate in primary elections without having to change their voter registration. They may request either a Republican or a Democratic ballot at the polls.

DTS voters who want to vote absentee can request a mailed ballot at [NMVote.org](https://www.nm.gov/nmvote) after April 7, 2026, but no later than May 19. They will be asked to select a Democratic or Republican ballot at that time. Or they can get a paper application for a mailed ballot from the County Clerk in the Municipal Building.

After April 7, 2026, permanent absentee voters who are DTS may select the ballot of their choice at <https://www.sos.nm.gov/primary>. The deadline for making the request is May 19.

Same day voter registration (SDR) is available to those who are not registered. It is also available to voters registered with a minor party (Libertarian or Green) who wish to register with one of the two major parties and vote.

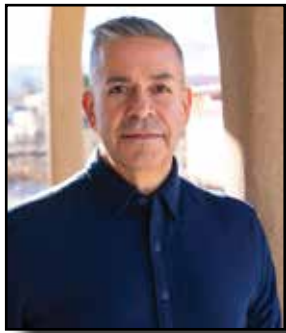
Voters registered as Republican or Democratic can change their registration on May 5 or earlier. They cannot use SDR to switch parties. They can use SDR to change their name, address, or other contact information.

All voters, particularly those who recently changed their registration forms, should check their registration status. To check your voter registration status, go to <https://voterportal.servis.sos.state.nm.us/wheretovote.aspx>. Note that ANY registration changes made after May 5, except by Same Day Registration, will not take effect until after the primary election on June 2, 2026.

# Candidate Questions And Answers

## United States Senator

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



### Ben R. Luján

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

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

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

#### 2. How would you address your highest priorities?

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

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

New Mexicans spend their lives paying into Social Security and they deserve to know that the program will be there to support them upon retirement. As a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which oversees Social Security programs, I know Social Security benefits are a vital lifeline for retirees and people with disabilities. Social security must be protected from funding cuts and Republican-led efforts to reduce benefits. I'm proud to support the Social Security Fairness Act to fully repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO), which currently reduce benefits for certain recipients.

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

The United States has not significantly updated its immigration laws since the 1980s, which is why I have long championed comprehensive immigration reform to address our broken immigration system and create an earned pathway for legal immigration. I support legislation like the DREAM Act to provide a

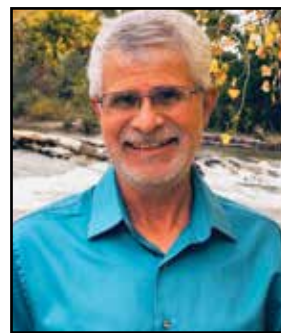
legal pathway for Dreamers, the SECURE Act, which provides qualified Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) recipients a path to legal permanent residency, and the Farm Workforce Modernization Act to reform and modernize our temporary agricultural worker visa program.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

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

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

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

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



### Matt Dodson

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I have been active for over twenty years in Democratic Party politics at the San Juan County and State levels. I am a leader and community organizer. I have been elected seven terms to the State Central Committee of the Democratic Party of New Mexico. I am a father, grandfather, and veteran. I detest injustice and will always fight for the disadvantaged. I am a Democratic Socialist. Everyone, including myself, is sick of the corruption and

do-nothing, spineless, bought-off politicians in Washington, D.C.

#### 2. How would you address your highest priorities?

I am committed to universal healthcare, getting money out of politics, free college education, and to finally taxing the billionaires. Citizens United must be repealed. As your next senator I will fight for all issues that have over 70% of Americans' support. People are pissed off. I will give them a voice. By taking no bribes, no billionaire's money, no corporate money, and no AIPAC money, I am not beholden to any of them. I'm too pissed off to be bought off. I will only reach across the aisle if it benefits the 99%.

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

The wealthy stop paying Social Security at \$185,500. I would remove that cap. That alone makes Social Security solvent. The wealthy need to pay 35% on capital gains and other income. The poor pay 15% on every dollar they earn. So should the rich!

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

In the Senate I will make DREAMERS citizens now and give immigrant citizens the same rights as everyone else. Anyone who has served eighteen months in the US military will be granted citizenship. I will set a pathway to citizenship and eliminate ICE. I will pass a law that codifies what a “speedy and fair trial” (The Constitution of the United States, Amendment VI) means -- to be in front of a judge within two weeks with legal representation. With the current lack of immigration judges and attorneys, this empties the concentration camps of immigrants currently in place.

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

I will strengthen and enforce environmental regulations as your next senator. Pollution permits need to take into account existing air and water quality. Any relaxed standards must be re-evaluated for human, animal and plant life. In every way possible I will assist the State of New Mexico to protect our waterways and aquifers. Our State’s water belongs to the people and must not be squandered on data centers, missile manufacturers and the like. Fracking waste is not water and must never, never be treated as such.

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

We need Universal Healthcare now; to include vision, dental, mental health and traditional healing for Native Americans and others. We need to build hospitals and clinics in rural areas. Free college means all the way to an M.D. for doctors, B.S. for nurses and medical assistant programs, etc. We need thousands of healthcare workers at all levels in New Mexico alone. Too many rural clinics cannot keep doctors and have closed because they serve so many low-income people and can’t get reimbursed for it. With Universal Healthcare, they will have a definite income stream to stay solvent and retain doctors. I look forward to fighting for you to make these things happen as your next U.S. Senator.’

### Larry E. Marker (Write-In)

(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

## United States Representative District 3

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



### Teresa Leger Fernández

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

As a daughter of rural New Mexico, I take our diverse voices to the halls of Congress. Even before serving, I built businesses & won legal battles for voting rights, tribal sovereignty & health care. As your Congresswoman, I’ve delivered huge bipartisan wins: \$100,000 for each eligible downwinder, uranium miner, or their survivors; over a \$1 billion in water funding for acequias, farmers and the Eastern counties & Navajo/Gallup pipelines; and \$5.45 billion for the HPCC fire victims. I’m protecting

public lands & water at Chaco Canyon & in the Pecos Watershed. As Chair of the Democratic Women’s Caucus & on the powerful Rules Committee, I’ve fought Trump on health care cuts, tariffs, war & the attack on our sense of shared humanity.

#### 2. How would you address your highest priorities?

My work always begins by listening to your stories of injustice and tragedy; pain and possibility. The powerful stories of New Mexicans is how I won bipartisan support for the most important laws and funding I’ve brought home. As a cancer survivor and sister of brothers lost to overdose, I share my own experiences about improving health care and addressing mental health and addiction. We must lower what it costs to live and this means taking on the corporate billionaires who gut worker pay and benefits. We must reverse the Republican tax breaks for billionaires so we can pay for what regular folks need. I will expand my Home of Your Own Act pilot project because a house you can afford is where you start building your American dream.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Healthcare is a basic human right, but big insurers and private equity profits means we pay more, wait more and get less health care here. I understand the

urgency of making care affordable and accessible everywhere, especially in rural areas. Congress must: Lower Drug Costs. We must build on the Inflation Reduction Act to negotiate lower drug prices for everyone and cap out-of-pocket costs. Expand and Improve Medicare. Moving toward a single-payer system like Medicare for All will save money and expand benefits to include dental, vision, and hearing coverage. Protect Access. We must codify reproductive rights through the Women's Health Protection Act and defend the Affordable Care Act & Medicaid against Republican bills to eliminate them.

## Martin Zamora

(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

## Governor

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



## Deb Haaland

(Democratic)

### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I am qualified to serve as Governor because I bring both lived experience and a proven record of results. I am a lifelong New Mexican, educated in our public schools, a first-generation college graduate, a single mom, and a small business owner who understands what it means to rely on Medicaid and WIC and fight to keep a family afloat. In Congress and as Secretary of the Interior, I delivered infrastructure and broad-

band investments, protected public lands, launched the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples Unit, advanced major clean energy projects, led historic pollution cleanup, and managed an \$18 billion budget and 70,000 employees. I know how to make government work for working people.

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

My top priorities are making New Mexico more affordable, strengthening education, improving public safety, and protecting healthcare. I want New Mexicans to afford groceries and rent, feel safe in their communities, see a doctor when they are sick, and ensure kids learn to read earlier. I will raise wages, expand tax relief for working families, pursue paid family and medical leave, grow affordable housing, and support job creation. I will invest in childcare, literacy, math, community schools, and educator recruitment. I will tackle violent crime, drugs, gun violence, and overhaul CYFD, while expanding behavioral health, crisis response, Medicaid, rural and Tribal access, and the healthcare workforce.

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

My goal is for every child's education to open doors. My top priority is helping kids read by third grade, because early literacy sets them up to succeed in every subject. I will invest in literacy support, coaches, summer learning, math

screening and intervention, and stronger instruction. I will protect and expand universal childcare, make early education easier to access, and grow quality childcare options. I will bring the trades into middle and more high schools, expand teacher residencies, improve pay and benefits, help with housing in rural communities, and expand community schools plus Native language and culture programs for rural and Tribal students.

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

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

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

We need to ensure new developments are mutually beneficial. They must: create good-paying jobs for New Mexicans, use local workers and contractors, protect families from higher utility costs, and leave communities better off. Projects should include strong community benefits agreements, accountability, and clawback provisions so the public is protected if promises are broken. They must also safeguard water, air, land, and public health, accurately report water use, and ensure high-demand industries provide clean energy and support grid stability. I want New Mexico to lead in energy, tech, film, and outdoor recreation with long-term value for our communities, not short-term gains for outside corporations that exploit New Mexicans.



## Sam Bregman

(Democratic)

### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I've spent my career delivering results and taking on tough challenges. As District Attorney, I've led the fight against violent crime, held offenders accountable, and worked to make our communities safer. As District Attorney, I've managed the largest "law firm" in the state, worked across agencies, and know how to turn policy into action. I'm running for governor to bring that same results-driven leadership to fix

what's not working and deliver for New Mexicans.

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

My top priorities are public safety, education, healthcare, economic opportunity and affordability. On public safety, I'll strengthen our juvenile justice system, hold violent offenders accountable, and invest in treatment and prevention for those who are addicted to drugs. In education, I'll focus on early literacy, set clear standards, and hold schools, parents, teachers and students accountable for results. On healthcare, I'll expand access by recruiting and retaining more doctors and allowing qualified providers to practice in New Mexico, especially in underserved areas. To grow our economy, I'll invest in workforce training, strengthen partnerships between education and employers, and create more opportunities in our burgeoning energy.

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

I'll focus on accountability, early literacy, and giving parents more choices. That means making sure every child can read by third grade, setting clear performance standards, and stepping in when schools are failing students. I will also address the chronic truancy problem that our state has been dealing with for years now. I support expanding public school options so families have access to the best options for their kids, including high-quality public charter schools. I'll also grow career and technical education so students graduate with real skills and pathways to good-paying jobs, while supporting teachers with the salaries and training they deserve and ensuring classrooms have the resources they need to succeed.

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

We have to be proactive and realistic about our water future. I'll focus on better management of the water we have by investing in conservation, improving infrastructure, and reducing waste. That includes supporting agriculture with more efficient irrigation, promoting water reuse and recycling, and using data-driven planning to prepare for long-term drought. I will create a cabinet level agency called the Water Resources Department which will focus on assuring there is enough water by looking at all the impacts to our acequias, tribal interests, agriculture, and economic development. This is about protecting our communities, our economy, and our way of life in an increasingly arid state.

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

We should evaluate every major project based on whether it delivers real benefits for New Mexicans. That means good-paying jobs with proper benefits, long-term economic impact, and alignment with our workforce and education systems. Projects should be financially responsible, transparent, and protect our natural resources, especially water. If a project doesn't create lasting opportunity and strengthen our communities, it's not the right investment.



**Gregory D. Hull**

(Republican)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I have been a New Mexico resident for more than 40 years, an entrepreneur, and Rio Rancho's longest-serving mayor, elected three times beginning in 2014. Before entering public service, I built and operated two businesses, gaining direct experience with job creation and regulatory challenges. As mayor, I doubled the police budget, helped Rio Rancho earn recognition as New Mexico's safest city, and attracted more than \$6 billion in investment. In 2024, Rio Rancho was named a Best Place to Live for Families and the state's most affordable city. I am ready to bring that same record of results to all New Mexicans.

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

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

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

New Mexico's reading and math scores rank among the nation's lowest, yet the state has responded by lowering standards rather than raising them. I will

reverse that trend by tying a portion of school funding to measurable gains in literacy, math, and graduation rates. I will expand career and technical education so students graduate with industry-recognized skills, establish accessible tutoring programs, and give parents transparent access to curriculum and progress data. I will also address chronic absenteeism and reform the Public Education Department to focus on results.

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

Water security is not optional — it is the foundation of economic growth, agriculture, and stable communities. Rio Rancho led the state with the state's first-ever aquifer recharge system. As governor, I will invest in brackish water treatment to create new sources of supply, reducing pressure on rivers and freshwater aquifers. I will upgrade aging infrastructure to cut leaks, expand advanced wastewater treatment for safe reuse, and support modern irrigation systems to protect farmers' livelihoods. I will meet our interstate obligations to deliver water downstream and pursue transparent negotiations to resolve outstanding Tribal water rights. Long-term certainty for every water user starts with planning ahead and acting now.

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

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



**Doug W. Turner**

(Republican)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I've spent my career in New Mexico building businesses that do work in more than in 40 countries, creating jobs and solving complex problems. I've served as Board Chairman of Public Charter Schools of New Mexico for 15 years, 8 years as Chairman of the New Mexico Judicial Standards Commission and also serve on the Village of Taos Ski Valley Village Council and TIDD board. My broad local, state,

national and international experience has prepared me to bring accountability back to Santa Fe—whether that's improving educational outcomes, making our communities safe, or standing up for the industries and small businesses that power New Mexico. I bring the kind of disciplined, results-driven leadership that can win across party lines.

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

My focus as Governor will be on public safety, improving educational outcomes, cutting personal income and gross receipts taxes, cutting red tape for small businesses, developing economic opportunity and creating good paying jobs so families can build bright futures in New Mexico. I believe our state's core issues are deeply connected and must be tackled together. Our economy cannot grow and become competitive regionally unless we provide safe communities, good schools, and a less burdensome tax system. I'll achieve those priorities by providing hands-on leadership in Santa Fe that brings together both parties, restores accountability, and demands that state government work more efficiently for taxpayers.

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

A strong K–12 system is the most effective long-term strategy we have for workforce readiness and crime prevention. Our schools must equip young people with skills, confidence, and a sense of purpose. I will fight to ensure that our public schools focus on the fundamentals like literacy and math, along with the real-world skills necessary for tomorrow’s workforce. I will implement meaningful parental choice so every parent can find the right educational fit for their child, and I will insist on accountability for outcomes, ensuring our schools are delivering results for students, not just spending taxpayer money on bloated administrative systems.

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

Water is the lifeblood of New Mexico — for our families, our farmers, and our future. As we face growing demands on limited supplies, we must treat water as a strategic asset and ensure compliance with and enforcement of established water treaties. At the same time, I will prioritize investing in modern infrastructure, reforming water governance, and promoting responsible stewardship of water resources. Expanding and protecting our water supply begins with sound science and data-backed planning that includes assessments on the health of our aquifers, evaluates reservoir capacities, and forecasts future needs.

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

New Mexico must aggressively diversify our economy to create sustainable prosperity. Part of that equation is large scale development projects although these are by no means the answer to long-term job creation of economic diversification. As Governor, I’ll promote our state to corporations seeking to leverage our many unique assets to grow. Our weather, scientific talent, geography, traditional and renewable energy resources are key drivers that set New Mexico apart. When evaluating proposed projects, we should focus on return on investment, job creation, and long-term potential. As Governor, I’ll support projects when they clearly expand the tax base, create good-paying durable jobs, and don’t leave taxpayers holding the bag.



### Duke Rodriguez

(Republican)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I spent multiple decades managing large systems. I started off at Lovelace, where I rose to become COO. I served as Secretary of the Human Services Department under Governor Gary Johnson. I headed a publicly traded company and built New Mexico’s largest legal, licensed medical cannabis company. As a political outsider, I will bring a fresh management approach to New Mexico’s problems. Coming from

the private sector, I know that New Mexico is not a poor state, but it is absolutely a poorly managed state.

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

Institute an attitude of stewardship over New Mexico’s budget, resources, and people. Enforce fiscal restraint so that public money actually benefits the people of the state. Eliminate state personal income tax. Eliminate gross receipts tax on retail sales. Manage Medicaid and SNAP sustainably. Invest in public infrastructure like desalination plants. Investigate public corruption so that taxpayer money is not wasted.

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

Allow teachers more latitude to actually teach. Identify high-risk, high-need students who distract from learning objectives. Invest in vocational education.

Stabilize the Educational Retirement Board pension fund so that teaching remains an attractive career.

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

Invest in desalination plants. Research water re-use, including of produced water. Take a stronger position in the Colorado River interstate litigation.

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

Is the project multi-use? Is the project sustainable? Does the project create jobs after construction? Does the project reduce poverty? Does the project improve quality of life for residents? Does the project serve families?

## Lieutenant Governor

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



### Maggie Toulouse Oliver

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I am New Mexico’s 26th and longest-serving Secretary of State. I have nearly 20 years of experience in county and state-level government, serving as Bernalillo County Clerk for 10 years before being elected to my current role. I have been involved in New Mexico politics since 1994, working for Senator Jeff Bingaman, serving as President of a New Mexico chapter of EMILYs List, and as director of

the New Mexico chapter of the League of Conservation Voters. I will be ready on day one to serve with the next Democratic governor of New Mexico as both a trusted advisor and a fighter for bold legislation as President of the Senate in the Roundhouse.

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

My top priority is lowering the cost of living for our families. Skyrocketing prices are making life even harder for New Mexicans. The current Administration is ripping health care, food assistance, housing security, and energy security away from working people. I will work with the next Democratic governor and the Senate to support legislation that protects earned benefits, closes gaps in federal funding, and taps into New Mexico’s wealth to invest in our people. I will support growing universal free childcare and improving public education, protecting women’s reproductive freedom, preserving our environment, and combating climate change.

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

I have cultivated positive working relationships with senators from across New Mexico over decades of work in politics. I will be a Lt. Governor who listens to legislators and keeps an open door. I also support modernizing the Legislature with paid salaries at the median earning level for New Mexicans. This will allow legislators to focus on their work without worrying about financial insecurity, and open the door to serving for more young and working-class New Mexicans. Modernizing the legislature should also allow for more professional staff to assist our legislators with the deluge of bills they receive each session.

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

The Legislature and the Executive Branch should have an open and positive working relationship, and it is clear that better transparency and trust between them are needed. Throughout my career, I have implemented transparency reforms and focused on good governance in my offices as County Clerk and Secretary of State. We have seen the results in speedier election reporting, more access to voting sites and information, and consistent efforts to communicate clearly with the public. I believe these principles are applicable everywhere, and I plan to utilize them as Lt. Governor.



#### Harold James Pope Jr

(Democratic)

##### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I've spent almost the entirety of my adult life in service, first in the U.S. Air Force for over 20 years, rising from enlisted to officer, leading teams and managing complex programs. Today, as a State Senator, I am fighting for working families, seniors, veterans, students, and our communities, passing legislation to expand education, provide tax relief, support veterans, protect our environment, and

strengthen public safety. I serve as Vice Chair of the Education Committee and key committees shaping our state's future. I also bring a strong academic background and am pursuing a Doctorate in Education. Most importantly, I show up, listen, and put people first—answering only to the people of New Mexico, not corporate or special interests.

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

My top priorities are affordability, education, jobs, & healthcare. I will lower costs by expanding housing & down payment assistance, capping prescription drugs, & targeted tax relief. I will strengthen public education by supporting families, investing in educators, STEAM, trades, & culturally relevant learning. I will grow living-wage jobs through workforce training, apprenticeships, economic incentives, and tech & clean energy investments. I will expand healthcare access thru a public option, including behavioral health, & address provider shortages. We must also improve public safety, protect our environment, & invest in infrastructure. As Lt. Governor, I will partner with communities to deliver localized solutions and real results.

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

As Vice Chair of the Education Committee, I've learned that an effective Senate depends on preparation, collaboration, and accountability. I come to hearings ready, work across the aisle to resolve issues early, and help keep meetings focused, transparent, and productive. As Lieutenant Governor, I will bring that same approach to presiding over the Senate. I will ensure sessions run efficiently, respect members' time, and uphold a fair and consistent process. I'll work with leadership from both parties to prioritize legislation, reduce bottlenecks, and create space for thoughtful debate without unnecessary delays. Most importantly, I'll lead in a way that is accessible, transparent, and focused on delivering results for the people of NM.

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

As Lieutenant Governor, I will serve as the people's ombudsman. Someone who shows up, listens, and helps New Mexicans navigate their government. I will create a clear, accessible constituent services process so individuals and small

businesses can raise concerns and receive timely responses. My office will track issues, follow up, and ensure accountability. I will also expand communication through community forums, digital outreach, coordination with local leaders, and weekly walk-in office hours. Transparency will be a priority by making agency information more accessible and elevating concerns when they arise. This role is about being a bridge between the people and their government, ensuring every New Mexican is heard and served.

#### David M. Gallegos

(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED



#### Manuel (Manny) Lardizabal

(Republican)

##### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I hold studies in Criminal Justice from Western New Mexico University, grounding me in the principles of justice, public safety, and ethical leadership. I also completed specialized training through The New Mexico Corrections Department (Penal Law, Juvenile Delinquency, Forensic Science), The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (Corrections Officer and Administrative Training), Leadership and Ministry Programs focusing on Business Leadership, Biblical Studies, and Financial Stewardship. As a private investor and entrepreneur, I understand fiscal responsibility, economic growth, and what it takes to create jobs and opportunity for working families. I also served on the Bernalillo/Albuquerque Retired & Senior Volunteer Program Advisory Council.

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

##### 1 Public Safety: We face rampant crime, drugs, and violence that threaten our communities. I will achieve this by supporting law enforcement with resources and reforms, cracking down on cartel influence at the border, and implementing tough-on-crime policies like mandatory minimums for repeat offenders.

2 Economic Growth: My plan includes tax cuts for working families and businesses, streamlining permits to attract energy and tech sectors, and promoting entrepreneurship rooted in New Mexico's natural resources.

3 Quality Education: I'll push for school choice, parental rights in curriculum, and accountability measures like performance-based funding, while eliminating radical ideologies to refocus on reading, math, and practical skills.

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

I will preside over Senate sessions fairly, professionally, and in a nonpartisan manner, maintaining decorum while keeping proceedings moving smoothly. I will collaborate closely with the Senate President Pro Tempore to ensure bills move efficiently through committees, reach the floor promptly, and avoid bottlenecks that delay critical legislation. I will maximize our 30-day regular session by ensuring bills are prefiled, introduced before deadlines, and prioritized appropriately. We must use interim time productively so senators arrive prepared when session begins. I will foster bipartisan cooperation, focusing senators on shared goals—improving education, strengthening our economy, and keeping communities safe.

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

As Lieutenant Governor, I will make open government and two-way communication a top priority. My approach rests on three core principles: 1. Launch a

centralized, user-friendly online portal where New Mexicans can track agency actions, budget allocations, and policy decisions in real time. 2. Hold monthly town halls across all regions of New Mexico—in person and via Zoom—to listen directly to residents' concerns and answer questions about government actions. 3. Ensure all agency advisory board meetings are publicly announced and streamed, with opportunities for public comment. Government should not operate behind closed doors—it should serve with the people, not over them.



### Aubrey Blair Dunn

(Republican)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I have worked my entire professional career to hold government accountable to the laws and constitutions, I will continue to do so using that experience to preside over the Senate, and to advocate for the citizens as their voice directly in the executive branch.

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

My top priorities are to work with the Legislature to pass real and drastic reforms to education, criminal justice and to make living here more affordable for New Mexicans by making sure they keep more of their hard earned money.

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

By providing guidance working on cross the aisle to make sure that the laws that are passed not only represent sound policy benefiting all New Mexicans and to call out laws that are likely unconstitutional early so that time is not wasted on Legislation that attempts to strip New Mexicans of their rights, for instance to lawfully keep and bear arms.

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

By being a direct advocate for citizens with the Governor's office and all state agencies to make sure that the laws are being followed and people are being treated fairly by the government including federal agencies.

## Secretary of State

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



### Katharine E. Clark

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

With 25 years of experience in elections and public service, I am the two-term Santa Fe County Clerk in New Mexico's complex third-largest jurisdiction. I have modernized operations, built a high-performing election system with high turnout, 100% election-night reporting, while designing systems and policies adopted statewide by the SOS. I passed a national policy to block Trump's election interference and helped beat him in court. I led an overhaul of county clerk training to

protect elections. I am the only person in NM with national and state election administration certifications, and my office earned 13 national awards for election performance. I will bring that same experience, toughness, and vision to the Secretary of State's office.

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

As Secretary of State, I will defend democracy by protecting voters from chaos, doubt, and intimidation, and I will be tough on Trump and his allies who undermine trust. I will expand ballot access by bringing youth civic education state-wide, improving ballot language, expanding jailhouse voting, and strengthening Native voting rights and transparency. I will run trusted elections by working with county clerks, ensuring 100% election-night reporting, providing tools to prevent errors, and offering real-time turnout dashboards. I will reduce the influence of dark money by expanding public financing and increasing campaign finance transparency. I will continue modernizing the office with better technology and a clear, user-friendly website.

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

I will increase participation by making voting easier, clearer, and safer. That means expanding civic education programs we built in Santa Fe, clear ballot language, improving absentee voting through more drop boxes and faster ballot curing, overhauling the voter registration agent program, improving language access, streamlining voter registration systems, and using voter tools like apps, ballot tracking, and turnout dashboards. I will protect participation by fighting misinformation, stopping intimidation, and ensuring voters know their rights. Confusion and delays suppress turnout. Trump's politics depend on confusion and fear. I believe the Secretary of State's job is to ensure every eligible voter can cast a ballot and have it count.

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

We need to move faster than the lies. I will make the Secretary of State's office the most trusted source of election information in NM by improving the website, expanding real-time updates, building tools like real-time results and turnout dashboards, and responding quickly to misinformation, including AI-generated fakes. As a panel expert on AI in elections, I understand how these threats evolve and how to counter them. I believe in prebunking falsehoods before they spread by educating voters early and making election information easy to understand. I have already built real-time election tools voters use today. MAGA's movement thrives on confusion. I want voters to have clear facts, trusted information, and confidence in the system.

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

The Secretary of State must protect voter data, support county clerks, enforce election law, and ensure elections are secure, transparent, and fair. I'm elected to the national election security board to monitor threats and share real-time information across states. That means strong cybersecurity, accurate voter rolls, secure polling places, and rapid response to threats or misinformation. My office has implemented first-in-nation election security innovations and is nationally recognized. I will defend New Mexico's elections from political interference, including federal overreach. This requires coordination across every county. Democracy cannot be taken for granted. The Secretary of State must protect voting and public trust.

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

I come from a hardworking military family where service and the defense of democracy were paramount. This office is elected in a partisan system, but the

work must be grounded in defending the right to vote. The SOS serves all New Mexicans and must follow the law and the facts, not political pressure. I am a fifth-generation union member, am LGBTQ, and have a bilingual family, and I believe the government must work for all communities, particularly rural and tribal. As Trump tries to turn election administration into a partisan weapon, it is more important than ever to have leadership that is independent, transparent, and fair. I lead with professionalism and integrity so every New Mexican can trust the outcome, no matter who wins.



**Amanda López Askin**

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

As a public servant for 25 years, I have a diverse background in corporate and governmental organizations. By any measure I am the most qualified and experienced candidate to be Secretary of State. I am in my eighth year of serving as the Doña Ana County Clerk, administering twelve elections in the second most populous county with arguably the most contentious elections. I am qualified for this office

because I bring both hands-on election administration experience and a deep commitment to public service. I have worked directly in the systems that make our democracy function. I understand what it takes to run accurate, secure, and accessible elections because I have done that work on the ground. I know the pressure election workers face, t

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

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

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

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

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

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

tion to discourage participation or undermine trust.

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

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

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

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



**Ramona L. Goolsby**

(Republican)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I am a veteran, healthcare professional, rancher, and advocate with a proven record of service and problem-solving. My experience has instilled the discipline, leadership, and accountability needed to manage complex systems and deliver results. I have been actively engaged in election-related issues, working to promote transparency, accuracy, and public confidence. I understand the Secretary of State’s role is

not political, but administrative, ensuring fair, secure, and accessible elections for all eligible voters. I bring a practical, solutions-oriented approach focused on efficiency, integrity, and serving all New Mexicans.

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

My top priorities are strengthening election integrity, improving transparency, and increasing voter accessibility. I will work to ensure accurate voter rolls, secure systems, and consistent procedures across all counties. I will expand public access to clear, timely election information so voters understand how the process works and can have confidence in the results. I also support practical improvements that make voting more accessible for eligible voters, including efficient processes and strong communication with local election officials. My approach is focused on accountability, clarity, and ensuring every eligible vote is counted accurately and securely.

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

To increase and protect voter participation, we must focus on access for eligible citizens and restoring confidence in our system. Participation is tied to trust. I will transition from an activist model to a professional, rule-based administration where the Secretary of State acts as a fair referee. I will restore trust by implementing common-sense voter ID and performing regular maintenance of

voter rolls. Removing outdated registrations protects the value of every legal vote and prevents administrative errors. When the public has confidence that rules are followed transparently, they are more likely to engage. My goal is to make voting secure and straightforward, ensuring the office serves the people and provides a clear path for every e

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

In this era of rapid technological change, the Secretary of State must be the definitive, nonpartisan source of truth. I will modernize the office's communication by ensuring our official website is a user-friendly hub where voters can instantly verify registration and polling data. To address the challenges of AI and social media, I will prioritize professional oversight and clear, consistent communication that empowers voters with facts. I will focus on providing transparent, real-time data that renders misinformation obsolete and work to ensure that state offices do not collaborate with platforms to censor speech. By maintaining an open and accessible record of truth, I will give every New Mexican the tools they need to navigate election.

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

The Secretary of State serves as the "fair referee" and chief elections officer, responsible for ensuring the rules are followed consistently and transparently. To safeguard voter information, the office must maintain clean and accurate voter rolls, removing outdated registrations for those who have moved, died, or become ineligible. This protects the integrity of the system and prevents administrative errors from disenfranchising lawful voters. Ensuring safe and fair elections also requires professional oversight of campaign finance and lobbying laws, enforcing them without political favoritism or activist influence. By prioritizing professionalism over partisanship, the office gives every New Mexican confidence that the electi

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

The Secretary of State should be a nonpartisan position because the office must serve as a fair referee for all New Mexicans, not a partisan operator. The role is to ensure that the rules of democracy, from election administration to campaign finance laws, are enforced evenly, professionally, and without favoritism. When the office is used to advance a specific political agenda, it erodes public trust and discourages participation. By operating as a professional administrative body rather than an activist platform, the office can focus on providing transparent oversight, protecting the access of every eligible voter, and ensuring that our election processes are secure and straightforward for everyone in our state.

## **Attorney General**

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



## **Raúl Torrez**

(Democratic)

### **1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I've served as New Mexico's Attorney General, an assistant District Attorney, assistant Attorney General, assistant US Attorney, and as a White House Fellow and senior advisor in President Obama's Department of Justice and have spent my career fighting to protect families. I have also served as District Attorney, managing the largest law office in the state, where we used smart-on-crime approach to solve decades-old rape cases. I've taken on extreme, right wing militias and big corporations like Facebook, and I know how to fight and advocate for the policies we need to make our communities safer. I will continue to fight to strengthen our criminal justice system, fight for consumers, safeguard the environment, take on corruption.

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

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

As Attorney General, I have used my nearly two decades of experience as a prosecutor to strengthen our criminal justice system by implementing common sense policies to keep violent, repeat offenders off our streets. Additionally, the office has aggressively fought for consumers and workers, safeguarded the environment, took on corruption and special interests, and protected our democracy and women's rights.

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Samuel Isaiah Kane Sr

(Republican)

### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

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

not happening. Our state has some of the poorest

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Attorney General is sworn to uphold and defend the law and protect the interests of the people. It is a privilege of that office to represent the people in court when the federal government tries to overstep its power and infringe upon rights guaranteed us by the U.S. Constitution. When the interests of the people

demand, and should our guaranteed rights be threatened, I will not hesitate to hold the federal government to account. I will also defend our own State's legislation against federal government attack in defense of our citizens' guaranteed rights. While I cannot rewrite the laws, I can, and will, prosecute and defend them with the full force of the New Mexico department of justice.

## State Auditor

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



## Joseph M. Maestas

(Democratic)

### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I've devoted my entire life to public service: over 30 years in Federal civil service and over 20 years in elected public service. I served as Chairman of the Public Regulation Commission, Mayor of Espanola and councilman in Espanola and Santa Fe. I'm also a licensed professional engineer. As State Auditor, I hold public entities and officials accountable for managing taxpayer funds and protect taxpayer money

from fraud, waste, and abuse. For example, my office has ensured that opioid settlement funds are being used properly and protected funding intended for mitigating natural disasters. Our office assisted small local public bodies like our acequias to become financially compliant and unlocked over \$10 million in withheld capital outlay.

### 2. What is your highest responsibility as State Auditor?

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

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

When public entity audit reports are submitted late, the public entity does receive a formal audit finding for a late report. As State Auditor, I work with the entity to get the audit report eventually submitted within 90 days of the submittal deadline. I use my professional judgement to determine the underlying causes of the late report and determine the best course of action to address the issues. This includes referring the entity to other agencies for additional actions and informing policy makers. When audit reports are chronically late, the OSA can step in as the auditor of last resort and directly assist the troubled entity to become financially compliant as was done for Mesalands Community College through annual and special audits.

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

The primary role of the State Auditor is to inform and notify. We do not inves-

tigate with the exception of our Special Investigations Division which investigates and manages fraud, waste, and abuse (FWA) cases. My top three issues are to investigate and/or examine: 1) Incoming, anonymous, and credible FWA cases as we average one complaint per day with almost 300 currently active cases; 2) Public entities that are chronically late in audit report submittals and have a severe lack of internal controls resulting in an adverse audit opinion and findings; and 3) Annual financial reports considered high-risk from conservators managing financial assets for protected persons in coordination with the District court system often leading to an audit.

### Joshua James Ryan Lawrence (Write-In)

(Republican)

NO RESPONSE RECEIVED

### State Treasurer

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



### Laura M. Montoya

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I am qualified to continue serving as State Treasurer because I bring more than two decades of direct experience in public finance, treasury operations, and government leadership — and because I am already successfully performing the responsibilities of this office. My career has been built around safeguarding public funds, strengthening financial systems, and ensuring that New Mexicans can trust their government to manage their money responsibly. As State Treasurer, I oversee the state's investment portfolio, cash flow, banking services, and financial compliance functions. My background uniquely prepared me for this work while also pushing financial fitness as a graduation requirement, baby bonds, and UNM/NMSU financial certification.

As State Treasurer, I oversee the state's investment portfolio, cash flow, banking services, and financial compliance functions. My background uniquely prepared me for this work while also pushing financial fitness as a graduation requirement, baby bonds, and UNM/NMSU financial certification.

#### 2. What is your highest responsibility as State Treasurer?

I swore an oath to be the state's fiduciary. A fiduciary must always act in the best interest of the funds. This is the highest ethical and legal obligation. My job is to provide safety, liquidity, and yield in that order. I pride myself in being accessible to the people and my job is to serve New Mexicans to the best of my ability even if it is not the most favored decisions I am required to make.

#### 3. How would you address your top priorities?

I have been addressing them, and we are ready to continue the work with your support. We are building a strong team to achieve our goals. We have made more money for the state and have the largest portfolio the state treasurer's office has ever had. We are holding the Trump administration accountable, especially when his orders negatively affect New Mexico.

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

If you are referring to working with banks to manage our cash deposits, we base the relationship on risk and compliance as well as their reporting, collateral requirements, and the rate they can provide. We are developing a new program

that will allow me to work with our local banks at a lower rate, with the commitment that the local banks will do more to contribute to our communities in small business loans, mortgages, and small loans for community members.

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

My portfolio does not "invest in any companies." The State Treasurer's Office is the liquidity for the state and invests per 6-10-10 NMSA. I am on 13 boards, councils and commissions including the SIC, which is the second largest sovereign wealth fund in the country. We just updated our NM portfolio to make it more successful where we focus on rate of return and now encourage and hold fund managers accountable to work in or with NM when appropriate. There are a lot of amazing investments occurring in NM whether through SBIC, economic development, Housing NM, NMFA or our investment decisions.



### James F. Ellison (Write-In)

(Republican)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

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

#### 2. What is your highest responsibility as State

#### Treasurer?

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

#### 3. How would you address your top priorities?

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

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

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

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

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

**Commissioner of Public Lands**

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



**Juan De Jesus Sanchez III**

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

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

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

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

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

**3. What are the greatest challenges facing the SLO?**

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

**4. How would you balance the oversight and protection of state trust lands**

**with the need to generate revenue for the support of the beneficiaries (e.g., public schools, universities, etc.)?**

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

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

The State Land Office should play a proactive role in facilitating responsible transmission development by leasing appropriate state lands and coordinating with federal, local, and tribal partners. Expanding transmission is critical to unlocking New Mexico’s renewable energy potential and growing revenue for our schools. At the same time, projects must be carefully sited to avoid impacts to sensitive landscapes, wildlife, and cultural resources. Done right, transmission can strengthen our economy while protecting what makes our state unique.



**Matthew McQueen**

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

My entire career has been dedicated to the type of work that the State Land Office does. I’ve been a real property attorney for over 30 years, specializing in land conservation but experienced in commercial development, affordable housing, mineral rights, water rights, you name it. I’ve served in the New Mexico Legislature for 12 years, and for the past 10 years I have chaired the House Energy, Environment

& Natural Resources Committee. And I have a track record of success in the Legislature, including working to raise the royalty rate in the Permian Basin, protect the Gila River, block the importation and storage of high-level nuclear waste in New Mexico, and reform the Department of Game & Fish into a modern Department of Wildlife.

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

We need to diversify the revenue of the Land Office by pursuing more renewable projects (wind, solar, geothermal), commercial projects (on appropriate parcels), and affordable and workforce housing (again, on appropriate parcels). We can do all of that while protecting agricultural lands, conservation and cultural areas, and outdoor recreation. I will continue to hold the oil and gas industry accountable, as the current administration has done and as I have done in the Legislature. And I want to establish an in-house education advocate to work with the Public Education Department, the Legislature (including LESC and LFC), unions, and others in supporting, promoting, and protecting public education.

**3. What are the greatest challenges facing the SLO?**

I plan to build the capacity of the Land Office. Even though the Land Office earns over \$2 Billion per year, it relies on the Legislature for its \$27 Million budget. My legislative experience will be integral to working with the House Appropriations Committee, Senate Finance Committee, and our next governor to invest in New Mexico by investing in the State Land Office. Additional in-house technical, legal, and environmental professionals will allow the State Land Office to produce more revenue for New Mexico’s schools while pro-

protecting our treasured outdoor places. Nationally, our public lands, our public institutions, and our public schools are under attack. As Land Commissioner, I will fight to protect them.

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

The State Land Office holds 9 million surface acres (13 million mineral estate) in trust for all New Mexicans. There are areas that are appropriate for commercial or residential development; there are many other areas that are not. With so much land to work with (12% of the state), the Land Office can effectively earn money for the Land Grant Permanent Fund (which supports public schools, universities, and hospitals) while protecting agricultural lands, conservation and cultural areas, and outdoor recreation. I have expertise in all of these areas. Finally, in the Legislature I was a staunch advocate for ethics, transparency, and public process, and I will bring that advocacy with me to the Land Office.

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

In order to further develop renewable resources, we must also improve our transmission capacity, and that's why this year I sponsored and passed House Memorial 20 to create a "Renewable Energy Infrastructure Study Group" with public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders. The Study Group is tasked with developing ideas to create an approval process that is "swift, certain and fair; reasonably safeguards land, water, wildlife and scenic resources; and ensures meaningful public participation and appropriate judicial oversight." That will be a challenging task, but, pursuant to the memorial, the State Land Office will have a seat at the table.



**Jonas Moya**

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I'm running for Commissioner of Public Lands because I've spent my life working on the land and my career managing programs that support farmers, ranchers, and rural communities. Our state trust lands fund our public schools and institutions, and they deserve steady, experienced leadership. I bring both real-world land experience as a rancher and management experience from leading the USDA

Farm Service Agency in New Mexico. This office is all about responsible stewardship. I aim to balance conservation efforts with economic opportunities, ensuring our lands remain vibrant and supportive for future generations.

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

My top priorities are strengthening revenue for our schools, supporting responsible energy development, and protecting the long-term health of our land.

That means continuing to generate strong returns from oil and gas while also expanding opportunities in renewable energy, conservation leasing, and outdoor recreation. I also want to ensure that rural communities benefit from the lands around them through jobs, access, and economic development.

**3. What are the greatest challenges facing the SLO?**

The State Land Office faces the challenge of balancing strong revenue generation for our schools with responsible stewardship of our land. Oil and gas revenues remain critical to funding education, but markets are volatile, and we need to ensure long-term stability. Another major challenge is diversifying revenue by expanding renewable energy, conservation leasing, and other opportunities,

while maintaining working lands for ranchers and rural communities. We also face increasing pressure from drought, wildfire risk, and climate impacts, which require proactive land management and strong partnerships with local stakeholders.

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

The State Land Office must do both: protect our land and generate strong, consistent revenue for our schools and institutions. Those goals work together when managed well. I would ensure all development. Oil and gas, renewable energy, and other uses are done responsibly, with clear standards that protect the long-term health of the land. At the same time, we must maximize returns through competitive leasing, strong oversight, and accountability. Diversifying revenue is key. By expanding renewable energy, conservation leasing, and recreation, we can reduce risk and build more stable, long-term funding. My focus is on delivering for today's beneficiaries while protecting our lands for future generations.

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

The State Land Office should play a proactive role in facilitating responsible transmission development. That means streamlining permitting on state trust lands, coordinating with utilities and developers, and ensuring projects are sited in a way that minimizes impacts to working lands and natural resources. Expanding transmission is essential to unlocking both renewable energy and continued responsible oil and gas development, which support our schools and economy. At the same time, we must ensure fair returns for trust beneficiaries through well-structured easements and leases. With the right balance, we can modernize our infrastructure, strengthen our energy economy, and protect the long-term value of our lands.



**Michael Jack Perry**

(Republican)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I've spent my career working on the ground in New Mexico, managing and stewarding the very lands this office oversees. I served over 20 years with the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish, rising to Major of Southern Field Operations, and later as Assistant Commissioner of State Lands, where I helped manage millions of acres of trust land. I also run a wildlife and habitat consulting business, working directly with ranchers and landowners. I understand how land, water, and resources support our communities, and I bring practical, real-world experience, not theory to this job.

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

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

**3. What are the greatest challenges facing the SLO?**

The biggest challenge is balancing increasing demand for revenue with responsible stewardship of the land. New Mexico relies heavily on trust land income

to fund education, but we must also protect the long-term health of those lands. Other challenges include water scarcity, wildfire risk, access limitations, and ensuring fair and consistent policies across energy sectors. The SLO must also improve coordination with federal and local partners to better manage land, resources, and infrastructure.

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

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

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

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

## State Representative District 43

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



### Christine Chandler

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

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

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

**2. How would you address your highest priorities?**

To lay the ground work for my legislative priorities, I consult constituents, various stake holder groups and colleagues in both chambers as well as executive

branch staff to understand state needs and gaps. I study the underlying policies and often look at successful legislative approaches in other states. My current legislative priorities continue to be health care access and quality, data privacy, AI consumer protection regimes, and the protection of the civil rights of all New Mexico residents. I will continue to work to support initiatives that improve our educational system and the welfare of our children and families.

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

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

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

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

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

Improving patient access to health care requires both short-term strategies and long-term strategies. Short-term strategies include enacting all the health care compacts, implementing strong recruitment programs, supporting increased physican residency programs, and offering robust loan repayment programs. Longer-term strategies include expanding the medical school and other health care educational programs. The quality of our schools and the safety of our neighborhoods are issues that have been cited as detracting from our recruitment efforts. We must continue to advance policies that address these issues as well.

## Court of Appeals Judge Position 1

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



### Kris Houghton

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I believe wholeheartedly that due process is for everyone and that no one is above or beneath the law. I vow to uphold the US and NM Constitutions. I have served in this office since Gov. Lujan Grisham appointed me last year, after I was recommended to her by a bi-partisan nominating commission. I have since authored opinions for the Court in both criminal and civil law. I served most of my 18-year legal career

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

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

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

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

With just 10 judges on the Court of Appeals serving the entire state, there is a great need for efficiency. Toward that goal, the Court has developed a number of strategies over the years. For example, the Court manages a team of experienced staff attorneys who use a calendaring system to filter cases by degree of difficulty. The Court recently piloted a successful mediation program that facilitates settlement for appropriate cases. Those strategies have reduced the number of cases awaiting a decision. But the Court should (and does) strive toward continual improvement. To that end, the judges meet monthly to discuss and employ new methods. I look forward to building more efficiency in the way we write and participate on our opinions.

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

I am married to María Montoya who is an OB/Gyn and attending physician at the University of New Mexico Hospital. My wife and I are raising three children in and stay busy with their track, football, soccer, basketball, and piano activities. I earned my law degree from the University of New Mexico School of Law, where I received the Dean's Award for Significant Contribution to the Law School Community and was on the Dean's List and Honor Roll. I also previously served as a Captain in the US Air Forces Reserves. I was commissioned as an officer in the US Air Force JAG Corps and was assigned to the 27th Special Operations Wing at Cannon Air Force Base and the 377th Air Base Wing at Kirtland Air Force Base.

## District Court Judge 1ST JUDICIAL District DIVISION 04

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



### Denise Marie Thomas

(Democratic)

#### 1. What qualifies you for this office?

I worked as an attorney for 26 years before being recommended by the bi-partisan Judicial Nominating Committee and appointed to serve as a District Judge by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham in March of 2024. I have served Santa Fe, Rio Arriba and Los Alamos Counties as the Family Court Judge since that time. I worked as a family law attorney for 10 years before being appointed as a judge. I

had the privilege of assisting families through some of the most difficult times

in their lives, with the goal of helping them get through these experiences with dignity, compassion and understanding. The work I do as a judge is an extension of my work as an attorney; only now, I am able to reach and help even more people.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## District Court Judge 1ST JUDICIAL District DIVISION 08

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



**Anastasia Rose Martin**

(Democratic)

**1. What qualifies you for this office?**

I am qualified for this position because my education, experience and connection to the community ensure equity, equality and justice. I started my legal career at the First Judicial District Attorney’s Office in Santa Fe and stayed with the office for approximately ten years. I practiced in Rio Arriba County for roughly six of those years and conducted approximately 75-100 jury trials. I was appointed

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

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

The experience, knowledge and relationships that I have gained throughout the duration of my career as well as my commitment to the community serve me best as a current District Court Judge. Given my extensive trial experience I am very comfortable with courtroom procedure, the rules of evidence and trial practice. I believe that these skills are invaluable on the bench. Additionally, given the experience that I had practicing in Rio Arriba I am very aware of gaps in services as well as systemic community issues such as deficient community transportation. This knowledge is extremely important to ensure that I can help direct individuals to services that are needed and ensure that they can comply with court orders.

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

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

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

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

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

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

trial practice it is important to me as a community member, parent and a professional that I am contributing to the community in a positive and productive way.

**Los Alamos County Magistrate Judge**

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



**Catherine E. Taylor**

(Democratic)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Los Alamos County Sheriff**

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



### David Izraelevitz

(Democratic)

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

A three-decade Los Alamos resident, I served as a County Councilor from 2011 to 2022. This service gave me insight into the Sheriff's minimal duties compared to those of our Police. As a Councilor, I participated in many discussions about the Sheriff's Office and the reality that its sole remaining legal duty is managing the local Sex Offender Registry. We

would be best served by formally consolidating all public safety duties, including sex offender registration, under our Police.

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

Due to training and other requirements, our Police already handle all aspects of reviewing and updating the state and National sex offender registries in Los Alamos, resulting in the Sheriff's role as essentially nil. If elected, I will thus donate any salary and lead a transition plan, building on the previous Nov. 2016 effort, to place the abolition of this position on the Nov. 2028 ballot, ensuring sufficient time for an orderly transfer of policies and duties.

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

Los Alamos residents can get up-to-date and accurate information on registered sex offenders via Offender Watch, an online database available through our Sheriff's Office webpage, also available as a smartphone app. Our Police regularly access and update all Los Alamos data available there. As Sheriff, I will include all subscription, training, outreach, and related costs in the County budget so the public will continue timely and accurate access to this resource.



### Antonio L. Maggiore

(Democratic)

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

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

to serve and strengthen our community.

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

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

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

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

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

### Los Alamos County Assessor

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



### Jeff Casalina

(Democratic)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Los Alamos County Councilor

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



**Steven S. Lynne**

(Democratic)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



**Joseph F. Granville**

(Democratic)

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

I served as County Sheriff from 2019-2022. I have worked for the community as a Board member of Little Forest Play School and Family Council. I bring a fresh perspective to addressing community needs. I have a broad skill set across design, construction, so-

lar energy, and transportation with experience as a former small business owner, operations manager, and design/sales associate. I’ve built a strong foundation in developing solutions that balance people’s needs within logistical constraints.

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

Affordable housing and economic development require upgrades to key infrastructure that is in the Council’s purview. Roads, utilities, and other services need to scale to meet anticipated growth. There are new approaches to building efficient, beautiful homes that obviates the need for a large labor force. There is real demand for more medical, dental, and behavioral health care. With changes at the state level, the Council could draft a plan for attracting more health care professionals.

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

I make a distinction between growth in terms of population and growth as a successful outcome of supporting home ownership and desirable rental options for people who work in the community. We should plan for purposeful growth so that we balance the needs of a growing population and preserve what we love about Los Alamos. North Mesa can expect to see increased traffic, higher demands on utility infrastructure and the possibility of new school(s). The growth might create retail opportunities.

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

According to the County (4/13/26), there are no currently unfunded Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). The \$40 million November bond initiative passed and the new GRT rate begins in July. The second phase \$35 million bond initiative will be on this November’s ballot.



**Theresa Ann Cull**

(Democratic)

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

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

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

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

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

Business Coalition to identify actions to support their needs and encourage business development; implementation underway.

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

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

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

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



**David E. Hampton**

(Democratic)

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

I'm currently on the UNM-LA Advisory Board, Planning & Zoning Commission, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Transportation Advisory, Environmental Sustainability, Personnel, and Amigos del Rancho Los Luceros, having previously served on Parks & Recreation, Board of Registration, Cooperative Market, and Arts Council. I've attended almost all County Council meetings since 2021, including Strategic Leadership Planning and Budget Hearings. I retired from LANL Project Controls in 2017.

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

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

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

Previous studies indicate growth to 27,000-30,000 people. Start by adding 2,500

new units, most of which are already approved, and possibly go higher, depending on infrastructure constraints, with affordable housing a priority. Focus primarily on infill and redevelopment in our downtown areas, with some gentle density in our other neighborhoods. Promote downtown walkability and provide additional public transportation options around transit oriented development and sustainable business.

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

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



**Melanee M. Hand**

(Democratic)

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

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

ment/management, construction management, and environmental programs. My Master's education in Organizational Management has been very useful for my role as a County Councilor.

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

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

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

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

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

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



**Jason Alan Chappel**

(Republican)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



**Eric Roland Stromberg**

(Republican)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Los Alamos County Probate Judge**

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



**Perry C. Klare**

(Democratic)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Los Alamos County Municipal Judge

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



#### Elizabeth K. Allen

(Democratic)

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

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

expertise, judicial experience, and a strong commitment to education and community-focused justice.

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

Since being sworn in as an attorney 18 years ago, I have worked diligently to understand and represent all sides of the legal system. My career has included service as both a prosecutor and a defense attorney, giving me a comprehensive

and practical understanding of criminal law, constitutional protections, and the real-world impacts of judicial decisions. This balanced perspective allows me as a judge to approach each case with fairness, neutrality, and respect for the rights of all parties.

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

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

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

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

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

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

