

June 25, 2025

To the members of the Legislative Finance Committee,

Common Cause New Mexico writes this letter in advance of the Thursday, June 26th meeting where the cost of our state's elections will be evaluated and presented with the Secretary of State. In recent years, our organization has worked closely with the Secretary of State's Office to advance ballot access and election security in New Mexico. The proactive leadership of the Secretary, lawmakers, and election focused organizations like ours has helped set the national standard for performance in elections.

One of the most impactful improvements to our state's election infrastructure was the creation of Voting Convenience Centers. Since their implementation in 2011, voter registration and participation has increased across several election cycles, with record breaking voter turnout for the 2020 and 2024 contests. These centers provide voters with greater accessibility in some of the largest counties by land area in the United States, and on tribal lands.

New reforms such as backend automatic voter registration, same day voter registration, and - most recently - semi-open primaries further contribute to increased voter participation and engagement. These upgrades require sustained investment for administration, technology, and security.

While New Mexico focuses on the future of elections, federal support has declined. Cuts to federal funding of elections and the disbanding of election-security groups and advisors leave New Mexico with less support and increased vulnerability.

During a time of rising costs and heightened national scrutiny, establishing a reserve within the SOS budget would help prevent disruptions due to unanticipated voting costs or other potential financial shortfalls while under the new presidential administration.

Elections are at the core of our democracy. Their smooth and secure operation is essential to safeguarding the will of the people. New Mexico cannot afford to scale back critical investments in our electoral ecosystem while our democracy is increasingly being put at risk.

In order for New Mexico to maintain its position as a leader in election access, security, and integrity, our organization urges the Committee to take swift action to increase funding for the Secretary of State's Office and the broader election infrastructure it supports.

Respectfully Submitted,



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