

**Our mission** is to make sure that every voter has equal protection under the law when it comes to voting and that by making sure that every voter is heard, we help get at the root cause of our political dysfunction. Our goals are to create a system in New Mexico with more competitive elections leading to a better functioning legislature and increased voter engagement.

# NEW MEXICANS WANT MORE OPEN ELECTIONS

## Editorial: 2016 elections prove NM should open its primaries

By Albuquerque Journal Editorial Board  
Saturday, November 19th, 2016 at 12:02am

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The 2016 election season delivered some surprises that had little to do with President-elect Donald Trump. A record number of New Mexicans – over 326,000 – voted in the primary elections. Libertarian presidential candidate/former Gov. Gary Johnson took 9.3 percent of the general election vote in New Mexico (and 6.3 percent in his native North Dakota), crossing the 5-percent threshold to get his Libertarian Party major-party recognition and public funding for elections in those states.

But it was no surprise that a large number of New Mexico's races were decided long before the state's June primaries were held. Still more were decided in those primary elections and long before a general election ballot was cast.

Many recently elected or re-elected legislators simply walked right back into office without ever having to make a case for continuing to be responsible for the state's budget and laws.

For the 42 seats in the New Mexico Senate, 27 incumbents faced no opposition in 2016 – not in the primary and not in the general. Thirty-six did not face an opponent in the primary. Only one senator faced opposition in both, Sen. John Sapien, D-Corralles.

For the 70 seats in the New Mexico House, 57 incumbents faced no challenger in the primary election, and 37 incumbents faced no opposition in the general election.

Lack of choice certainly contributes to the argument for moving the state's June primaries up – New Mexico is one of the last states to hold its primaries, and voters have virtually no say in winnowing down the national party active Republican

## Reader View: It's time to open primary elections

Posted: Saturday, February 6, 2016 7:00 pm  
By Angelina L. González-Aller  
As Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton dominate the airwaves, much attention has been drawn to the upcoming 2016 presidential primary. Last week I weighed in on who will be the Republican and Democrat presidential matter: New Mexico's independent and Democratic candidates.

## NMPolitics.net the real story

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## Open primaries to all voters or stop funding them with public money

By Heath Haussamen, NMPolitics.net | May 17, 2016

COMMENTARY: In New Mexico, 19 percent of registered voters – including me – decline to join any political party. Another 3 percent register with a party label other than Democrat or Republican.

Independents and minor-party members added up to 272,301 New Mexicans as of April 29, the most recent statistics on voter registration available online.

Even though our tax dollars help pay for New Mexico's upcoming June 7 Democratic and Republican primaries, those of us who don't join those parties aren't allowed to vote in the primaries.

election system disenfranchises people. ment against open primaries. Why should people not affiliated in which candidates it places on the general election ballot?

my tax dollars pay for Democrats and Republicans to decide out on the ballot.

county commission, and other races are decided in primaries, before hundreds of thousands of New Mexico voters are presents them.

re challenging incumbent Sen. George Muñoz of Gallup in primary, but there's no Republican in that race. Former Sen. Mimi Stewart of Albuquerque in that inner is unopposed in November.

## COMMON CAUSE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY JANUARY 2017



### OPEN VS CLOSED PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Approximately seven-in-ten (71%) voters believe primary elections should be open to all registered voters rather than only allowing Democrats and Republicans to vote in their respective primaries. Not surprisingly, independents are the most supportive of this proposal (83%), though the large majority of Democrats (70%) and Republicans (64%) support open primaries in New Mexico.

