



**NEW MEXICO FIRST**  
*People. Ideas. Progress.*

## New Mexico Democracy Project invites candidates to help build trust in elections

**For immediate release: October 25, 2022**

Contact: Kenn Rodriguez, New Mexico First, 505-379-2666 - [kenn@nmfirst.org](mailto:kenn@nmfirst.org)

### Candidate Principals for Trusted Elections

The Candidate Principles for Trusted Elections are simple and straightforward and were developed for a [national initiative](#) that New Mexico and four other states have brought to a more local level. The five principles are:

**Honest Process.** Cooperate with election officials, adhere to rules and regulations, and refrain from knowingly propagating falsehoods about the electoral process.

**Civil Campaign.** Encourage a peaceful election atmosphere during the pre-election, polling, counting, and post-election periods. Denounce any attempt to intimidate, harass, threaten or incite violence against opponents, their supporters, and election workers.

**Secure Voting.** Respect voters' freedom to exercise their lawful rights to register and vote, free from interference, obstruction, or intimidation.

**Fair Oversight.** Encourage political parties and others to train poll-watchers on the election process and appropriate roles and behaviors, responsibilities, and obligations.

**Trusted Outcomes.** Make claims of election irregularities in accordance with the law and acknowledge the legitimacy of the outcomes after the results have been certified and all contestations decided.

ALBUQUERQUE, NM – With the goal of building trust in both candidates and elections, the New Mexico Democracy Project was recently launched by an alliance of local groups with the goals of getting candidates to sign on to its **Candidate Principals for Trusted Elections**.

These five concepts – **Honest Process, Civil Campaign, Secure Voting, Fair Oversight, and Trusted Outcomes** – are the cornerstones of the Candidate Principles. Candidates are asked to denounce harassment or violence against their opponents, their supporters, and election workers. The full concepts are in the left-hand column.

A coalition of local organizations has invited all candidates for office to endorse a set of principles to follow through the current election cycle. New Mexico First, the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce, the New Mexico Local News Fund, New Mexico Open Elections, New Mexico Public Broadcasting Service and others believe New Mexico candidates, as well as other leaders, can be role models for our state, and for our nation.

“We must take steps to restore the People's confidence in the electoral system by ensuring every legitimate vote that is cast is counted, counted properly, and to secure the ballots and processes to prevent others from improperly voting another person's ballot,” stated Greg Nibert, Republican candidate for State Representative, in his endorsement of the Candidate Principles.

The Candidate Principles for Trusted Elections is an activity of the [New Mexico Democracy Project](#), coordinated by New Mexico First, a nonpartisan New Mexico nonprofit. The set of five simple and straightforward principles were developed as part of a national initiative supported by a cross-partisan network of civic, business, and religious leaders including the Carter Center, Ford Presidential Foundation, Lugar Center, and the National Institute on Civil Discourse.

Endorsers of the Candidate Principles for Trusted Elections include **Hon. Garrey Carruthers** (R), former NM Governor and **Hon. Diane Denish** (D), former Lieutenant Governor; **Stephanie Garcia Richard** (D) and **Jefferson Byrd** (R), both candidates for Commissioner for Public Lands; **Kim Stewart** (D), running for Sheriff of Doña Ana County; **Clinton Harden** (R), former State Senator and Secretary of Labor; **Greg Nibert** (R), State Representative; **Joanne Ferrary** (D), State Representative, and many more. With their commitment to fair and civil elections, these state leaders are helping to set an example for current and future elections.

“A free, fair and open election process is the bedrock of our democracy,” said Stephanie Garcia Richard, the Democrat incumbent candidate for Commissioner of Public Lands. Her opponent, Republican Jefferson Byrd, added: “This is not a party issue. The people of America have questioned recent election results from both major parties. Honest elections are crucial to our Republic.”

Candidates, present and former elected officials, organizations, and individuals are invited to sign on at the [New Mexico Democracy Project page](#) at [www.nmfirst.org](http://www.nmfirst.org).

###

### About New Mexico First

*New Mexico First builds consensus on critical issues facing our state and communities and leads positive policy change through deliberative town halls, forums, and nonpartisan work on education, the economy, health, natural resources and good government. The organization was co-founded in 1986 by U.S. Senator Jeff Bingaman (retired) and the late U.S. Senator Pete Domenici. New Mexico First is a 501(c)(3). Visit [www.nmfirst.org](http://www.nmfirst.org) to learn more about the organization.*