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STATE ETHICS COMMISSION

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PRESS RELEASE

The State Ethics Commission Outlines Priorities for 2025 Legislative Session

Albuquerque, NM, January 21, 2025 – The State Ethics Commission is supporting two bills that aim to increase public trust in officials by shining additional light on the process of lawmaking and elections.

“The Ethics Commission enforces New Mexico’s ethics laws, including those requiring lobbyists to disclose their activities, as well as holding campaigns and officials accountable for violating election laws,” said Jeremy Farris, Executive Director for the Commission. “In doing this we’ve discovered loopholes which allow lobbyists and PACs to operate in semi-darkness. This year, we are supporting a few incremental reforms that will align our state with the disclosure standards followed by the majority of other states.”

The Commission’s top priority, a bill which will update the **Lobbyist Regulation Act** includes several requirements, most of which lobbyists already fulfill voluntarily. Under the bill lobbyists will be required to disclose:

1. The date on which the expenditure was made.
2. The vendor, service provider, or entity that received payment for the expenditure.
3. The individual(s) or group(s) who directly benefited from the expenditure (e.g., the Members attending a dinner).
4. The client that hired the lobbyist (e.g., immediate employer such as a lobbyist’s own consulting firm).
5. The specific individual or organization on whose behalf or at whose request lobbying is conducted.

6. Purpose of expenditure, including: The legislation connected to the expenditure, identified by specific bill numbers where applicable and the stance taken regarding the legislation on the date of the expenditure.
7. The total amount spent and a description of what the expenditure entailed.

New Mexico’s current reporting requirements put it in the lowest tier of all states when it comes to lobbyist disclosure, according to the 2022 OpenSecrets lobbyist disclosure report card. OpenSecrets is a Washington D.C. non-profit that tracks lobbying and campaign finance. New Mexico ranks 41st compared to neighboring Colorado which ranked 3rd and Texas, which ranked 8th.¹

“The proposed amendments will enhance transparency, strengthen public trust, and reaffirm New Mexico’s dedication to open and accountable governance,” said Farris. “By mandating clearer and more comprehensive reporting, these changes will provide the public with greater confidence in the democratic process and the integrity of legislative decision-making.”

“The bottom line is that this is information the public should have,” he added.

The Commission is also supporting a bill brought by Sen. Peter Wirth that will amend the **Campaign Reporting Act** related to the disclosure of the sources of funds for political advertisements, independent expenditures and of personal loans that candidates make to their own campaigns. The bill also adjusts reporting and prohibited periods in the Campaign Reporting Act to make those requirements clearer. The reforms will help shine a light on campaign contributions and the influence of money in politics.

For additional information, see: (1) [Discussion Draft Bill: Amendments to the Lobbyist Regulation Act](#); (2) [The State Ethic Commission's CRA Memo](#); (3) [The State Ethic Commission's 2024 Annual Report](#).

About the State Ethics Commission

The State Ethics Commission is an independent, constitutional state agency with the authority to enforce civil violations of New Mexico’s governmental ethics and disclosure statutes, including the Financial Disclosure Act. The Commission is comprised of three Democratic Commissioners, three Republican Commissioners, and one independent Commissioner who is registered as “decline to state.”

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For more information about the State Ethics Commission, visit www.sec.nm.gov.

¹ See OpenSecrets, State Lobbying Disclosure: A Scorecard (June 28, 2022) available at <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/reports/layers-of-lobbying/lobbying-scorecard>