

2022 NEW MEXICO ELECTION ADMINISTRATION, VOTER SECURITY, AND ELECTION REFORM REPORT

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Help America Vote Dollars



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Executive Summary

Overview of the 2022 New Mexico General Election

- In the 2022 general election 1,364,599 New Mexicans were registered to vote. Of those, 714,754 New Mexicans voted. The 2022 election had the largest number of voters for a midterm election since 2002, but this represents only 43.4% of eligible voters, about 3% lower than in 2018.
- Democrats made up 44% of registered voters, but 48% of voters in 2022. Republicans made up 31% of registered voters, but 36% of voters. Decline-to-State (DTS) and other party members made up 25% of registered voters, but only 15% of voters.
- 54% of 2022 voters were women, with men comprising the other 46%. These are the same percentages we saw in 2018 and 2020. Women make up 53% of registered voters, which suggests that women have a slightly higher turnout rate than men.
- Women are far more likely to register as Democrats than men (53% vs 43%). Men are more likely to register DTS/other than women (18% vs. 13%). Men are also more likely to register as Republicans than women (39% vs 34%).
- 2022 saw a 4% decrease (from 13% to 9%) in voters between the ages of 18 and 29 compared to 2020. Voters ages 30-44 also decreased but only 2 points from 21% to 19%. Voters ages 45-64 rose slightly from 34% to 35%, while voters aged 65 and over saw the largest increase from 31% in 2020 to 38% of the electorate in 2022.
- 2020 was the first year NM implemented same day registration, which resulted in 11,449 new voters. This option continued to be popular in 2022, with 10,694 same day registrants. 57% of voters surveyed support this new policy.

Summary of Key Findings from Voter Experiences with Voting Process and Voter Confidence

VBM Voters

- VBM voters typically only made up about 10% of voters before the pandemic, but in 2020 that number more than tripled to 35%. In 2022 vote mode returned to more or less what we saw in 2018, with Election Day voting almost identical to 2018 at 36%, early voting four points lower at 50%, and VBM four points higher than 2018 at 14%.
- Historically there are only small differences in vote mode decisions across partisan groups. But in 2020 Democrats (45%) were more likely to vote-by-mail (VBM) than DTS/Other (34%), and Republicans (22%). Though VBM dropped significantly after the pandemic back to 2018 levels, the 2020 partisan trend continued in 2022 with Democrats (18%) more than twice as likely as Republicans (8%) to vote by mail.

- In 2022, one-third (33%) of absentee voters said that they tracked their mail ballots. Among the reasons given for tracking, 55% said they believed the election was too important to risk their ballot being rejected, 38% were concerned that their ballots would be lost in the mail, 17% said they were automatically signed up for the tracking, 7% were concerned that their ballot would be rejected.
- Among those who did not track their ballots, 55% fully trusted that their ballot would be received and counted, 37% were not aware that they could track their ballots, 5% worried that their information would be used for non-election purposes, and 1% did not feel comfortable tracking their ballots online or through texts.
- Given the popularity of ballot tracking, ***we recommend expanding the program and communicating with voters about tracking to sign up more VBM voters and help to build trust in the system.***
- We asked the following three questions: (1) “Who returned your ballot or dropped it in the mail?” (2) “Did you return someone else’s ballot?” (3) and, if so, “Whose ballot did you return?” Nearly nine in ten (88%) voters returned their ballots themselves. One in ten voters (11%) indicated that a member of their family returned their ballot. About 12% indicated they returned someone else’s ballot. Of those who indicated they returned another voters’ ballot, two-thirds (66%) indicated the ballot belonged to their spouse, while 24% of voters said they returned a parent’s ballot and 2% indicated they returned a child’s ballot. 15% reported returning another family member’s ballot, while none reported returning a friend’s ballot.
- We also asked voters who returned someone else’s ballot, “How many ballots did you return?” 92% returned one or two ballots, while about 7% returned three, and 1% returned four. No one indicated that they returned more than 4 ballots.
- We find that 68% of VBM voters mailed their ballot through the USPS, either from their home (28%) at a USPS location (30%) or at a post office box not located at a USPS office (10%). 5% used a ballot drop box, 9% dropped their ballot at an Early Voting Center, 7% took their ballot to the County Clerk’s office, and 5% dropped it at a Voting Center on Election Day. 4% reported emailing their ballots.
- We asked voters who dropped off their ballots, “Why did you decide to drop off your ballot rather than mail the ballot back in?” The most common response was that they wanted to be certain that it arrived (28%), followed by dropping off being convenient (23%). 19% said they didn’t have enough time to use the USPS, and 13% said they did not trust the USPS to deliver it on time. Republicans were more likely to indicate that they wanted to be certain their ballots arrived (67%) than Democrats (25%) or Independents (28%).

In-Person Voters

- In 2022, NM in-person voters, on average, reported waiting about 7 minutes to vote. This is much shorter than voters waited in line in 2020 (20 minutes), but comparable to 2018 (6 minutes). In NM, Election Day voters were in line longer on average than early voters, 10 versus 4 minutes, but both wait times were much shorter than the comparable 13 and 22

minutes in 2020. Only 5% of voters waited in line longer than 20 minutes.

- We asked voters their level of agreement with the statement, “The poll workers were helpful.” 96% of voters agreed with this statement, with 64% strongly agreeing and 32% somewhat agreeing. Roughly 4% of voters disagreed with the above statement.
- To assess ballot privacy, we asked voters if poll workers looked at their ballot. 7% of voters indicated that this happened to them. Republicans (12%) and Independents (16%) were more likely to report a poll worker looking at their ballot than Democrats (3%). We also asked if other voters looked at their ballot; 1% responded yes. We also found that 1% of voters indicated that another voter in line asked them who they voted for.
- Privacy sleeves help to increase voter confidence by protecting ballot privacy. In 2020 we find that only about one in five voters were offered a privacy sleeve. In 2022 this increased to about one in four (24%). **We recommend the NMSOS continue to encourage voting locations across the state to adopt voter privacy sleeves for in-person voting.**
- Overall, 97% of voters indicated their polling station was easy to find. Relatedly, we also found that the vast majority of voters (93%) did not feel that they had to go far out of their way to vote, regardless of whether they voted early or on Election Day.
- 93% of voters found it easy to park at their polling location.
- We asked voters what type of identification they provided at the polls. 52% of in-person voters statewide indicated that they provided the poll worker with the minimum identification--their name, address and birth year. But three in ten (30%) were asked for (29%) or just provided (63%) a photo or non-photo ID.
- We estimate that 85% of voters were identified correctly with the minimum voter ID or with the voter’s preferred method, while 14% were identified incorrectly, and about 1% were uncertain. This is comparable to what we found in 2020.

All Voters

- On the question, “How confident are you that YOUR vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?” 65% were very confident, up from 56% in 2020. An additional 20% were somewhat confident, compared to 21% in 2020. Thus, over four out of five voters (85%) were very or somewhat confident that their ballot was counted correctly. Only 15% were not too confident (8%) and not at all confident (7%).
- Similar results are seen for county level voter confidence with 82% of voters indicating they were very (57%) or somewhat (25%) confident, while 18% stated that they are not confident, with 10% not too and 8% not at all confident.
- Three-fourths (75%) of voters indicated their confidence in state-level results, with 50% reporting very confident and 25% somewhat confident. 25% were not confident with 14% not too confident and 11% not at all confident.
- Voters were least confident of the national results, with over three in five voters (64%) indicating they were very (40%) or somewhat (24%) confident. Though voters were least confident in the national results, this was a 5-point increase from the 59% confidence level

in 2020. About one-third of voters (36%) indicating they are not too (19%) or not at all (17%) confident.

- Confidence differed by party. On personal confidence, the average Democratic voter had a confidence level of 3.9 on a 4-point scale, close to “very confident.” But the average personal voter confidence for Republicans was much lower, at 2.8. Independent voters had an average score of 3.1, which puts them close to “somewhat confident.” These partisan differences in confidence are even more pronounced at the national level. While Democrats’ confidence drops from an average of 3.9 to 3.6, Independents drop by half a point from 3.1 to 2.6, and Republicans drop even farther from 2.8 to 2.0, nearly a one-point decline.
- Confidence also differed somewhat by race. On personal confidence, 90% of whites and 92% of Blacks were very or somewhat confident that their ballot was counted as intended, while Hispanics were only 75% confident. 2020 and 2022 are the first years where we have seen different levels of confidence by race and ethnicity.
- Also, men, middle-aged voters (41-64) and those without a college education reported lower levels of confidence.
- Individual experiences matter to voter confidence. Feelings that ballot privacy was protected increases confidence. 21% of voters who thought their ballot privacy was not well protected were very or somewhat confident, compared to 72% of voters who thought their ballot privacy was protected. However, it is important to note that only 6% of all voters thought their privacy was not protected.
- Helpful poll workers also increase voter confidence. Only 10% of voters who thought a poll worker was not helpful were very confident, compared to 50% of voters who thought their poll worker was helpful.
- Similarly, having a positive interaction with the county clerk or the Secretary of State’s office improves voter confidence. For example, one third of voters who were not satisfied with their county clerk’s response when contacted were very confident, while 72% of those who were very satisfied were very confident.
- Interestingly, vote confidence was not dependent on voters’ method of returning their ballot. Voters who dropped off their ballot in-person were equally confident as those who mailed it in.
- More than one-third (37%) of voters believe that their vote is not secret, while just over one-quarter (27%) believe that it is. The remainder (36%) were unsure.

Summary of Key Findings from Beliefs about Ballot Privacy, Possibility of Voter Coercion, Fraud, and Attitudes toward Election Reforms

- We asked whether voters believe that others could find out who they voted for without their personal disclosure. The questions were: 1) “How easy or hard do you think it would be for politicians, union officials, or the people you work for to find out who you voted for, even if you told no one?” and 2) “Do you think elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter had voted for?”

- Roughly one in five voters (21%) think that it is impossible for someone to find out who another person voted for, and another 9% indicated they didn't know, leaving over 70% of voters believing it is possible to learn someone's vote choices without their consent. Interestingly, 28% said it is somewhat or very easy.
- One-third of voters (33%) believe that elected officials are able to learn who voters chose on their ballots. The same percentage (33%) of voters do not believe elected officials can determine their vote, and another 34% indicated they did not know.
- There appears to be a partisan dimension to ballot privacy, with more Democrats (30%) believing it is impossible for others to find out who they voted for compared to independents (22%) and Republicans (12%).
- We gave voters a list of possible illegal election activities and asked, "Which of the following situations did you personally observe in the 2022 Midterm Election?" Most (89%) of NM voters indicated they did not personally witness any of these election fraud or irregular voting activities.
- Hardly any voters observed illegal activities during the election with all reports less than 2%. The most frequently cited illegal activities were someone filing out an absentee ballot for someone else (2%), voting machines failing to record votes (2%), and someone stuffing a lot of ballots into an official ballot box (2%). Less frequently cited were someone bribing a voter or paying for votes (1%), someone being improperly denied the chance to vote (1%), someone using a false identity to vote (1%), and voter intimidation at the polling place (1%).
- In the 2022 election, 6% of voters said unsolicited absentee ballots that did not belong to anyone in their household arrived at the voter's residence.
- Given the continued high percentage of responses from voters who received ballots for other voters not living in the household, **we recommend the NM SOS consider instructions to voters about what to do when they receive such ballots. In addition, we recommend the NMSOS set up an online registry that voters can use to identify and report these erroneous ballots so that the NMSOS can determine why ballots are being sent to wrong locations and their implications for ballot security and chain of custody issues.**
- Just because voters have not witnessed unusual election activities does not mean they do not believe they happen. Therefore, in our next set of questions, we asked about the frequency of voter fraud with the following question, "Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in New Mexico. Please tell me whether you think each event occurs all or most of the time, some of the time, not much of the time, hardly ever, never, or don't know."
- Voters were most concerned about the possibility of a non-U.S. citizen voting. Over one-third (36%) of voters believe this happens at least some of the time, with 16% indicating it happens all or most of the time and another 20% indicating it happens some of the time.
- Many voters also believed absentee ballots were thrown away after being submitted at least some of the time (33%) and that people submitted too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others (35%).

- Over three in ten voters believe that voters have intimidated other voters (30%), cast multiple ballots (30%), casted ballots under fake names (32%), and pretended to be another person to cast ballots (33%).
- We asked respondents if they support or oppose requiring all people to show a photo ID when they vote. We found that 71% of voters support voter ID requirements, with 20% opposed and 9% indicating that they do not know.
- As one would expect, significant partisan differences in support for voter ID laws existed. Only 47% of Democrats support voter ID laws, a major decrease from 61% in 2020. 99% of Republicans support voter ID laws, a slight increase from 96% in 2020. Independents were more split but leaned closer to Republicans, with 80% supporting voter ID laws. This is a slight increase from 78% in 2020.
- We asked respondents, “Thinking about elections and election reforms, which is more important to you, ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote or protecting the voting system against fraud?” Just over half (52%) indicated that ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote is more important, while 48% indicated that it was protecting the system against fraud.
- Nearly nine in ten Democrats (86%), compared to one in ten Republicans (10%), believe ensuring everyone eligible has the right to vote is more important. These trends are consistent with previous reports and suggest that Democrats have increased support over time while Republicans have decreased support.
- Republicans express similar support in the opposite direction; nine in ten Republicans (90%), compared to 14% of Democrats, believe that protecting the system against fraud is more important than expanding the franchise.
- Independents are far more split, with 42% favoring access and 58% favoring protection.
- To assess how voters feel about the current NM voter ID law, we asked: “New Mexico’s in-person voter ID law requires voters to state their address, name and birth year. Do you think this requirement is: too strict, just right, or not strict enough?” Our findings indicate 55% of voters believe the current law is *just right* while 43% believe it is *not strict enough*. 2% of voters said the ID law was *too strict*. This is virtually identical to voter responses in 2020.
- There is a partisan divide related to attitudes toward NM's Voter ID law. Where 81% of Democrats believe the Voter ID law is *just right*, only 25% of Republicans feel the same. Likewise, where 75% of Republicans believe the law is *not strict enough*, only 16% of Democrats feel the same. 41% of Independents believe the law is *just right*, while 59% believe it is *not strict enough*.
- We asked whether NM’s VBM requirement to include the last four digits of a voter’s SSN to verify their identity is “too strict”, “just right” or “not strict enough.” 62% said it is just right, while 36% indicated that it is not strict enough, with 2% saying it is too strict.
- We asked voters if they support or oppose moving all state and local elections in our state to permanent vote-by-mail elections for all voters. Overall, more than eight out of ten (81%) NM voters opposed moving to all-mail elections, with a majority (59%) strongly opposed.

Chapter 1. Introduction and Study Background

The 2022 New Mexico Election Administration, Voter Security and Election Reform Report represents a systematic examination of voter attitudes and experiences with the election, concerns about election security, and preferences for election reforms. The 2022 election was the first federal election since COVID where most voters were able to make voting decisions without regard to personal safety. Perhaps most importantly, New Mexico (NM) is a very voter-centric state that makes voting very accessible. NM has relatively weak voter ID laws,¹ no excuse absentee balloting, automatic voter registration, and same day registration.²

In Chapter 2 we report on overtime trends in turnout and party registration along with information about the macro context in which the 2022 election takes place. Data for this section come from the New Mexico Voter Registration File, other administrative data, and records on candidate spending, all of which provide descriptive information about the voting electorate in the 2022 election.

In Chapter 3 and 4 we examine a statewide survey of voters and compare the results to previous statewide surveys. The survey asks about voter experiences with and their attitudes toward the election process to help evaluate the efficiency and quality of the election. Voter experiences with their ballot, the condition of their polling site, and their interactions with poll workers, or other election officials provide important evidence about the voting process and the quality of the voter election experience.³ In addition, this year we continued with our 2020 deep dive into ballot privacy and voter coercion along with detailed questions about voter experience with the vote-by-mail (VBM) process. All these factors influence voter confidence and belief in the security and legitimacy of election outcomes.

Free and fair elections are one of the pillars of American democracy, but assuring a healthy democracy via a safe, secure, and efficient election process involves more than just making certain that elections work well. The public must perceive that voting is easy and accessible and that results are determined fairly and accurately without partisan bias or technical flaws.

Measuring voter confidence is one method to determine how the public views the integrity of our elections, and the legitimacy of the election outcomes. Because elections are the link between citizens and their elected representatives, it is necessary for voters to have confidence that elections result in impartial and legitimate outcomes. If voters lose faith, or have low confidence in one of the most fundamental aspects of a democratic society--the validity of the election

¹ In-person voters state their name and address or provide a preprinted QR code sent to them by their local county Clerk linking them directly to their voter record. Vote by mail voters had to apply for a mail ballot and include a signed affidavit that they are the person they are claiming to be.

² This is NM's last election with same day registration available before Election Day. In the 2024 federal election voters will be allowed to register during early voting and on Election Day.

³ See R. Michael Alvarez, Lonna Rae Atkeson and Thad E. Hall. 2013. *Evaluating Elections: A Handbook of Methods and Standards*. Cambridge University Press; Lonna Rae Atkeson and Kyle L. Saunders, 2007, "Voter Confidence: A Local Matter?" *PS: Political Science & Politics* 40(October):655-660; Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, 2007, "Poll Workers and the Vitality of Democracy: An Early Assessment," *PS: Political Science and Society*, 647-654; Thad E. Hall, J. Quin Monson, and Kelly D. Patterson, 2009, "The Human Dimension of Elections: How Poll Workers Shape Public Confidence in Elections," *Political Research Quarterly* 62(2): 507-522.

outcomes and the correct counting of individual votes--then the legitimacy of representative democracy itself may be at risk.⁴ Voter confidence is different from diffuse system support such as trust in government, and can be viewed as a performance measure stemming from a very visible governmental process, one in which most citizens have repeated personal experience.⁵

Because of questions related to election integrity over the last several election cycles, we have focused some of our survey on questions relating to voter concerns about possible election fraud and possible voter access problems. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) resources from the Secretary of State's Office were used to help fund this work, which seeks to help guide NM election policy and to incorporate public understanding of the process and their preferences into election reforms. It is also meant to serve as a guide to voters about the health of their state democracy and to provide NM citizens with information about the electorate and election administration processes, and to facilitate a transparent and open election system.

This is the ninth New Mexico Election Study (NMES). The first was fielded in 2006 and we have fielded a postelection survey in every subsequent federal election.⁶ To our knowledge, no other state or election jurisdiction has had this kind of sustained and independent scrutiny over multiple elections. But NM is a unique environment culturally, politically, and electorally, and many county clerks here, as well as Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver and a variety of activist organizations (e.g. Verified Voting NM and United Voters of New Mexico), have supported and encouraged our efforts. Moreover, feedback on our work from regular voters and poll workers, as well as responsiveness by local election administrators, has made our efforts productive and useful. Importantly these cumulative data sets provide comparative data to understand how change influences and alters state level opinion.

⁴ Atkeson, Lonna Rae, and Kyle L Saunders. "The Effect of Election Administration on Voter Confidence: A Local Matter?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 40 (2007): 655–60; Atkeson, Lonna Rae. 2014. "Voter Confidence in 2010: Local, State, and National Factors," in *Election Administration in the United States: The State of Reform after Bush V Gore*, edited by R. Michael Alvarez and Bernard Grofman, Cambridge University Press.

⁵ Atkeson, Lonna Rae, R. Michael Alvarez, and Thad E. Hall. "Voter Confidence: How to Measure It and How It Differs from Government Support." *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* 14, no. 3 (June 18, 2015): 207–19. doi:10.1089/elj.2014.0293.

⁶ In 2007, we released our first research report on New Mexico entitled the *New Mexico Election Administration Report*. At the beginning of 2010, we released our 2008 Ecosystem report. In early 2011, we released our 2010 New Mexico Election Administration Report; in May of 2013 our 2012 Bernalillo County Election Administration Report; in June of 2015 our 2014 Bernalillo Election Administration Report, and in June of 2017 our 2016 Bernalillo County Election Administration Report, and in June of 2020 we released our 2020 report. These reports are available for download at: <https://polisci.unm.edu/people/faculty/profile/nm-election-administration-and-other-reports.html>

Chapter 2. Overview of the 2022 New Mexico General Election

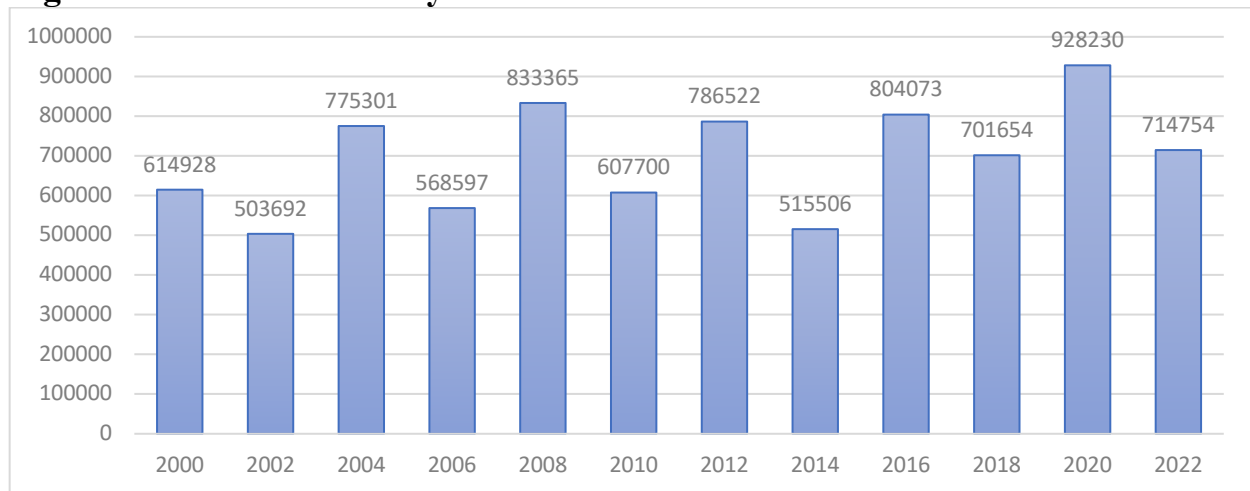
2.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 examines the characteristics of the New Mexico (NM) electorate for the 2022 general election and places these in a historical context. For this chapter, we rely mostly on administrative data, especially the NM voter registration file as well as the official canvass, and other state and national administrative data.⁷

2.2 Voter Turnout

According to the New Mexico Secretary of State Office, 714,754 New Mexicans voted out of 1,364,599 registered voters in 2022. Figure 1.1 shows the number of NM voters participating in each election since 2000. Figure 2.2 shows turnout as a percentage of eligible voters. This includes the entire voting eligible population (VEP) regardless of their registration status.⁸ The 2022 election had the largest number of voters for a midterm election since 2002, but as a percent of the eligible (43.4%) it was lower than 2018 (46.6%), and very consistent with the midterm turnout we saw in 2006 (43.1%) and 2010 (43.1%).

Figure 2.1. NM Turnout by the Numbers



⁷ The voter registration file had a time stamp of November 29, 2022. County clerks have 45 days after the election to complete data input, therefore this data set should provide complete information on 2022 voting history for all voters.

⁸ The voting eligible data comes from the electionproject.org.

Figure 2.2. NM Turnout as a % of Eligible Voters

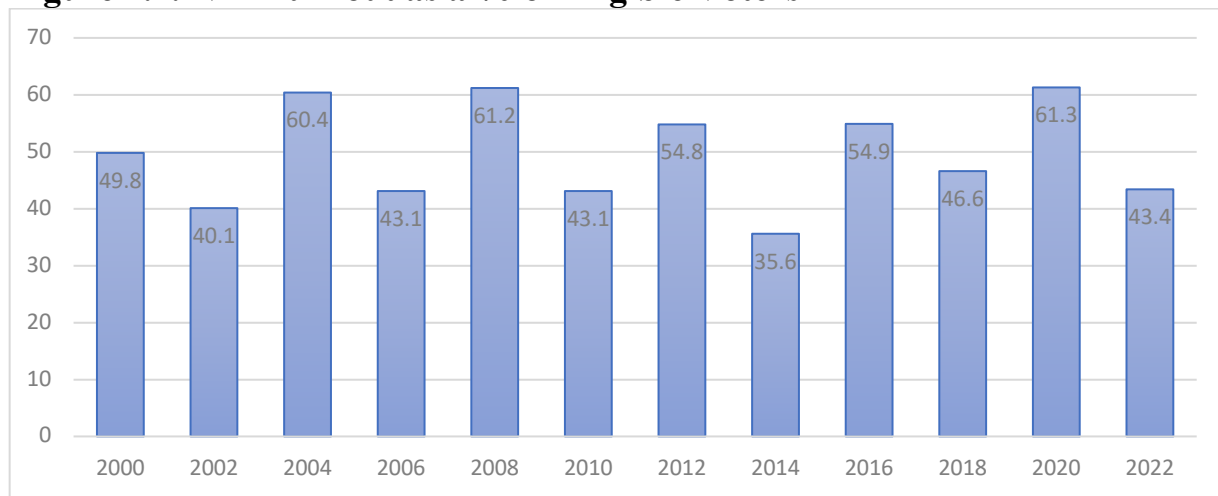
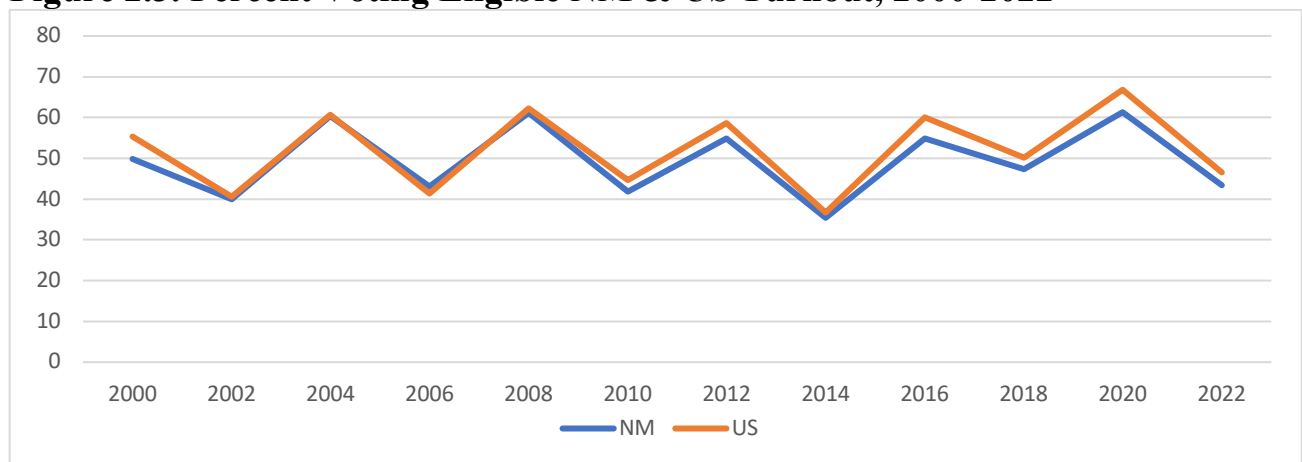


Figure 2.3. shows NM turnout as a percentage of eligible voters compared to average US turnout since 2000. NM’s turnout was very close to the US average through most of the 2000s, but in the 2010s, turnout started to drift lower and has remained below the national average.⁹ In 2010 and 2014 it was 2.9% lower than the US average; in 2018 it was 2.8% lower, and in 2022 it was only 1.2% lower. The declining turnout relative to the US average is an indicator that NM is a one-party and safe-blue state. In the early 2000s NM was a more competitive state at both the presidential and state levels which resulted in more resources pouring into the state for mobilization. With those declines in competition has also come a decline in turnout.

Figure 2.3. Percent Voting Eligible NM & US Turnout, 2000-2022



2.3. Is NM Blue?

Besides changes in turnout, another sign indicating NM is solidly blue is the fact that NM has large Democratic majorities (64%) in both the state House of Representatives and state Senate.

⁹ See <http://www.electproject.org/> for more information on the VEP and voter participation rates across the US over time.

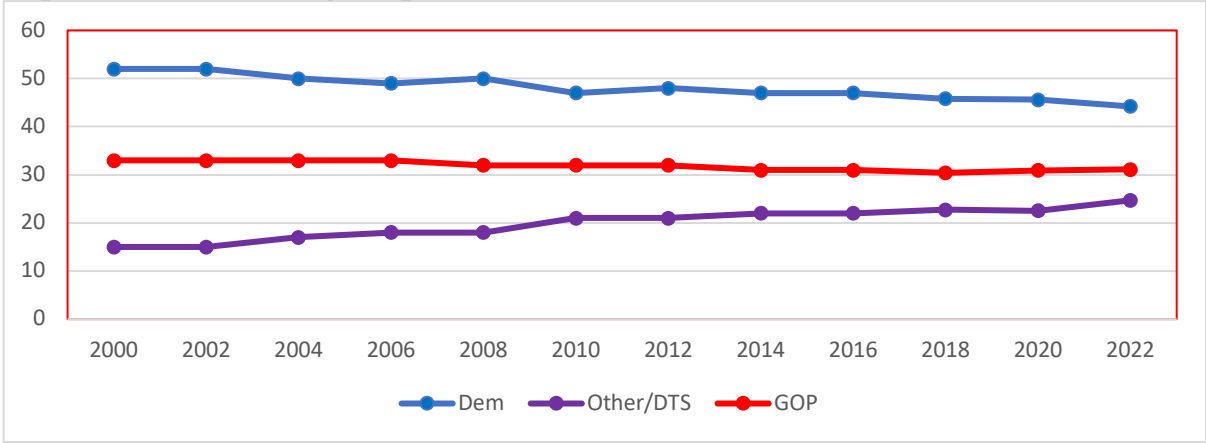
NM is a trifecta meaning that all the elected branches of government are held by the same party. Currently in the US, there are 22 GOP trifectas, 17 Democratic trifectas, and 11 states with divided government. In addition, NM is a Democratic triplex with the governor’s office, secretary of state and attorney general all under Democratic control. Currently there are 24 Republican triplexes, 20 Democratic triplexes (all trifecta states are also triplexes), and 6 states (4 with Democratic governors, 2 with Republican governors) with divided governments.

The Democrats also won back the 2nd Congressional District (CD2), making NM’s federal delegation solidly blue (3 Democratic Congressmembers and 2 Democratic Senators). However, if we use partisanship as a tool to understand the state’s partisan flavor, we find in Figure 2.4 that over the last 2 decades the proportion of major party registrants has declined. For Democrats, that decline has been fairly steep, moving from 52% in 2000 to 44% in 2022, while for Republicans the decline is less sharp, moving from 33% to 31%. These decreases have been off-set by an increase in “decline to states” (DTS) and other non-major party members, who have increased from 15% of registered voters in 2000 to about 25% in 2022.¹⁰ The changing nature of state partisanship suggests that NM is not a deep blue state, especially for statewide and federal offices, where larger numbers of DTS/other partisans are likely to participate.

2.4. Registration versus Turnout

NM is registering more voters through state agencies than ever before, especially through its automatic voter registration (AVR) system that operates through the Motor Vehicle Division (MVD). Voters obtaining a new license for any reason are automatically opted in for voter registration. This is increasing the number of registered voters, but it is not clear if it is increasing turnout. We note that in 2020 we identified about 145,440 registered voters, representing about 12% of all registered voters in NM, who never participated in an election. In 2022 that number grew to 208,933 voters, representing about 15% of the voters registered as of October 31, 2022.

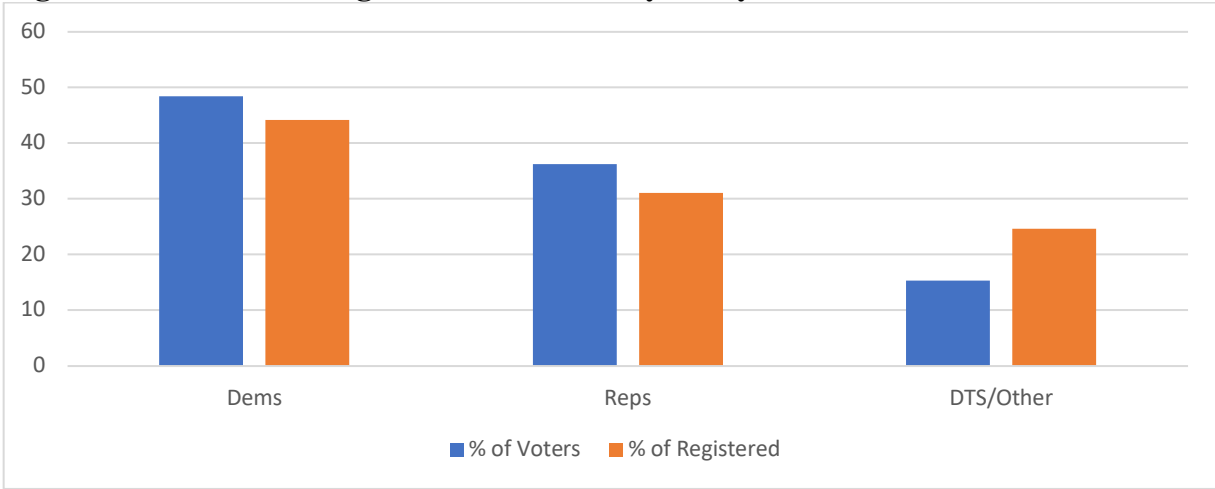
Figure 2.4. NM Party Registration 2000-2022



¹⁰ Throughout this report we combine Libertarian, Green, and other minor parties with DTS.

One implication of a larger number of voters registering, but not participating, is that when we compare voters to registered voters, the breakdown of partisanship is very different with more partisans and fewer Independents. As Figure 2.5 shows, Democrats comprised 48% and Republicans 36% of 2022 voters; each party is higher than their registration numbers—4 point for Democrats and 5 points for Republicans. Consequently, other partisans and DTS made up only 15% of 2022 voters, 9 points lower than their registration numbers. Lower voting rates among Independent voters is due to the large increases we see in voters registering as DTS due, in part, to the implementation of opt-in voter automatic registration laws that registers many less interested citizens who are not mobilized to vote. In 2025 NM will move to an opt-out policy that will likely continue to expand the number of registered nonvoters and the number of DTS voters. Therefore, it is likely these differences between registered and unregistered will continue to grow.

Figure 2.5. NM 2022 Registered & Voters by Party



2.5. Campaigns and Voters 2022

Redistricting Federal House Contests

The redrawing of district lines for the 2022 midterms that took place after the 2021 US Census dramatically changed the geography and voter makeup of NM’s three Congressional Districts (CDs). The maps in Figure 2.6 show the district changes before and after redistricting. New Mexico retained its three CDs, with CD2 becoming a Hispanic majority district based on population. CD1 saw a reduction in the non-white population of 8%, while CDs 2 and 3 saw increases of 6% and 2% respectively.¹¹ According to data from the 2021 US Census, the

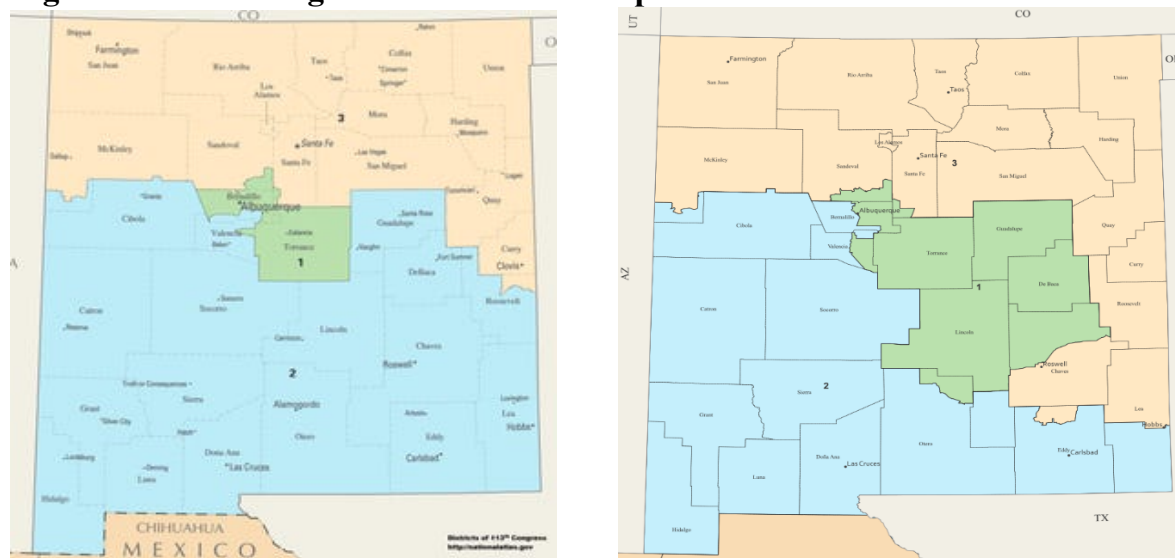
¹¹ See <https://www.politico.com/interactives/2022/congressional-redistricting-maps-by-state-and-district/new-mexico/>

population of CD1 is 42.6% Hispanic, CD2 is 62.2% Hispanic, and CD3 is 45.4% Hispanic.¹² While Hispanics make-up a majority of residents in CD2, they make up only 40% of registered voters. This is substantially more than either CD1, with only 25% of its registered voters with Hispanic surnames, and only 29% in CD3.¹³

Redistricting changed the partisan composition of all three districts making them more similar to each other in party registration as shown in Table 2.1. This change especially affected CD2, which went from a 50%/50% split in partisan make-up (excluding Independents) to a 58% Democratic, 42% Republican split. The other two districts remained solidly Democratic even with a modest decline in Democratic identification making up 5% in CD1, from 62% to 57%, and 3% in CD3 from 64% to 61%.¹⁴

The Republican Party sued over the drawing of the 2nd district claiming partisan bias. Steve Pearce, the Chairman of the NM Republican Party called the map “far from fair” and a “disservice to constituents” particularly rural conservative Democrats, Republicans and Independents.¹⁵ The Republicans sued the state legislature over the issue but the court ruled that though it was clear that there was legislative intention to dilute GOP votes it was not “egregious” enough to overturn the gerrymander.¹⁶

Figure 2.6. NM Congressional District Maps 2020 versus 2022



¹² See <https://www.census.gov/mycd/> or <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/congressional-and-state-legislative-districts/>.

¹³ Our measure is based on surname, not self-identification, nevertheless it is consistent with our statewide figure of 31% and is comparable to the state-wide registration of Hispanics, 33.6%, reported in the Current Population Survey of the US Census Bureau for November 2022.

¹⁴ See <https://www.sos.nm.gov/voting-and-elections/data-and-maps/voter-registration-statistics/>

¹⁵ See https://ballotpedia.org/Redistricting_in_New_Mexico_after_the_2020_census#Enactment.

¹⁶ Nash Jones, 2023 “A New Mexico judge rules against Republicans in a redistricting case,” KUNM NPR, available at: <https://www.npr.org/2023/10/06/1204321639/new-mexico-redistricting-ruling#:~:text=ALBUQUERQUE%20N.M.%20%E2%80%94%20A%20New%20Mexico,drew%20the%20boundaries%20in%202021>.

Table 2.1. Party Registration and Congressional District

	2022		2020	
	Democrat	Republican	Democrat	Republican
NM-01	57.2	42.8	62.0	38.0
NM-02	58.0	42.0	50.0	50.0
NM-03	60.8	39.2	63.6	36.4
Statewide	58.6	41.4	59.0	41.0

Table 2.2 shows the results of the 2020 presidential election under redistricting. CD2 was +12 for Trump in 2020 (55% to 43%), while the new Hispanic majority district would favor Biden +6 with 52% to 46% in his favor.¹⁷

Table 2.2. Presidential Election Results by Congressional District Based on Redistricting

District	New Districts		Predecessor Districts	
	Biden	Trump	Biden	Trump
CD NM-01	55.9	41.5	60.2	37.4
CD NM-02	51.9	46.1	43.1	54.9
CD NM-03	54.4	43.6	57.7	40.1
Statewide	54.3	43.5	54.3	43.5

*Daily Kos Elections 2020 presidential results

Table 2.3 shows the party breakdown of registered Hispanics and non-Hispanics (excluding independents). Among registrants who identify with one of the two major political parties, a super majority of Hispanics are registered Democrats. A majority of non-Hispanics are also majority Democrat in CD1 and CD3. Among non-Hispanics, only CD2 is majority Republican among those who registered with one of the two major political parties.

Table 2.3. Registered Voters by Party, Congressional District, and Hispanic

	Hispanic		Non-Hispanic	
	Democrat	Republican	Democrat	Republican
CD NM-01	66.9	33.1	53.8	46.2
CD NM-02	72.1	27.9	48.5	51.5
CD NM-03	73.1	26.9	55.6	44.4
Statewide	69.0	31.0	52.7	47.3

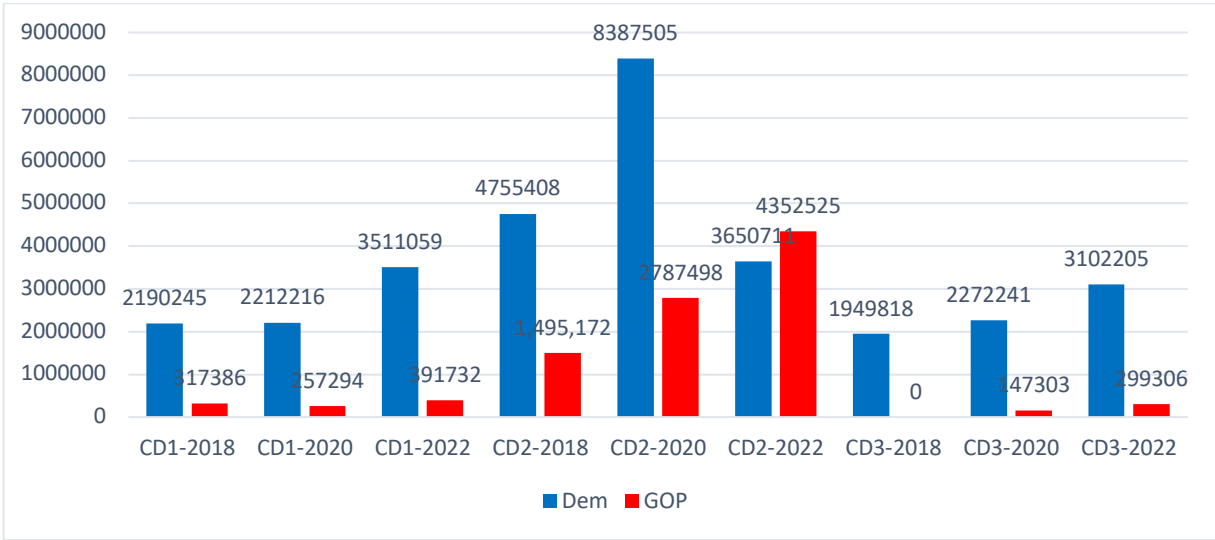
Gubernatorial and Federal Election Outcomes

¹⁷ See [Redistricting in New Mexico after the 2020 census - Ballotpedia](#)

Of course, party registration is strongly related to election outcomes, so it is no surprise that the entire federal US House delegation along with the incumbent governor’s contest went blue. The closeness of the CD2 contest was, however, quite a surprise. This contest featured freshman incumbent Republican Yvette Harrell and Democratic challenger Gabe Vasquez. Harrell first ran for the seat in 2018 when GOP Representative Steve Pearce resigned to run in the state governor’s contest but she was defeated by Democratic newcomer Xochitl Torres Small in a very close race with less than 4,000 votes between the winner and loser (Democratic candidate 101,489 (50.9) to GOP candidate 97,767 (49.1)).¹⁸ Harrell vowed to return and win in 2020 which she did by a whopping +8 (54% to 46%; 142,283 to 122, 546).¹⁹

In the newly redesigned district Harrell had a numerical uphill battle but a spending advantage unlike her runs in 2018 and 2020 as shown in Figure 2.7. In the 2022 election, the incumbent Yvette Harrell outraised the Democratic candidate by over \$700,000, or 19%. NM District 2 was one of the more expensive House elections in the country at the 24th highest overall in outside spending among 365 House contests, with incumbent Yvette Harrell ranking 74th out of 433 entries in candidate raised funds and 29th among Republican candidates (opensecrets.org).

Figure 2.7. NM CD Candidates Contributions Raised 2018-2022



Contribution data from followthemoney.org

Nevertheless, the Democratic challenger in a majority Democratic and Hispanic district eked out a win with a mere 50.4% of the vote and only a 1,350-vote difference between the party candidates (96,986 votes to 95,636 votes) as shown in Table 2.4. This district highlights the changing nature of Democratic and Republican support with more urban and educated “city”

¹⁸ See Atkeson, Lonna Rae and Wendy L. Hansen. 2020. “2018 NM Election Administration, Security, and Election Reform Report,” Typescript, University of New Mexico.

¹⁹ Atkeson, Lonna Rae and Wendy L. Hansen, 2022. “2020 NM Election Administration, Security, and Election Reform Report, Typescript, University of New Mexico. Available at: <https://www.sos.state.nm.us/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2020-UNM-Voter-Report.pdf>.

voters leaning largely Democratic and rural and white, and increasingly working class and rural Hispanic voters, increasingly supporting Republicans.

The two other House contests were much less exciting and easy wins for the Democratic incumbents even though both were relatively new to their districts. Melanie Ann Stansbury defeated Republican Michelle Garcia Holmes easily with 56% of the vote even though she had won the district in a special election after Deb Haaland resigned after her 58% victory to become Biden’s Secretary of the Interior. Similarly, the CD3 contest in the heavily Democratic northern portion of the state was an easy win for the Democratic incumbent, Teresa Leger Fernandez, against Republican candidate Alexis Johnson with 58% of the vote.

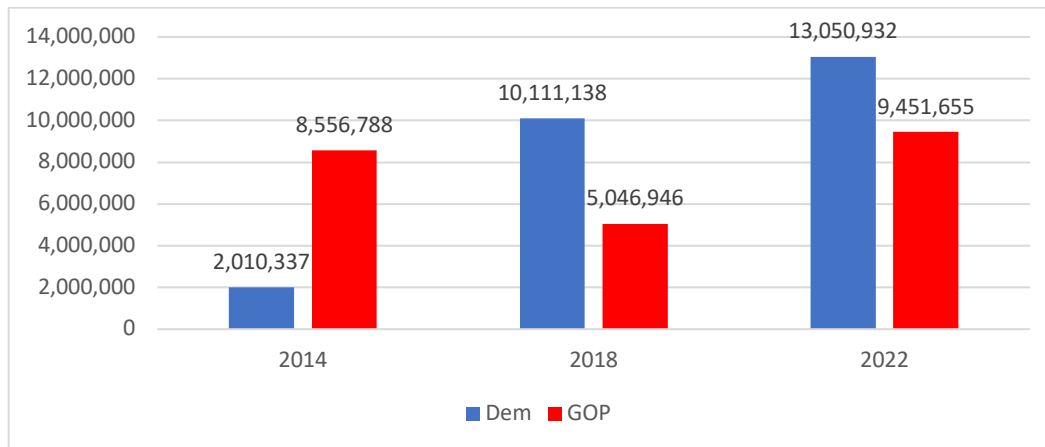
Figure 2.7 also shows the contributions raised in the CD1 and CD3 contests across three election cycles. GOP contributions have been relatively stagnant and very low in Districts 1 and 3, both Democratic strongholds, across all three election cycles, with Democratic candidate contributions rising across the last three cycles.

Table 2.4. Federal Campaigns and Governor Contest Election Outcomes 2022

Contest	Registered Voters	Actual Voters	% Vote D	% Vote R
Governor	1,362,028	712,256	52	46
CD1	498,420	280,671	56	44
CD2	414,067	192,673	50.4	49.6
CD3	449,534	230,782	58	42

The gubernatorial election featured incumbent Democratic candidate Michelle Lujan Grisham against NM local weatherman and former 2020 US Senate candidate Republican Ron Ronchetti. Incumbent Grisham easily defeated her GOP challenger 52% to 46%. Contributions to Democratic Gubernatorial candidates has increased dramatically since 2014 as shown in Figure 2.8. Contributions to the Democratic candidate increased 5-fold from 2014 to 2018 and increased by nearly a third from 2018 to 2022. GOP contributions lagged far behind Democrats in 2018, raising only half the contributions. And though GOP contributions increased in 2022, the GOP still raised about 38% less than the Democratic candidate. There are going to need to be much larger candidate investments by the GOP for the state to turn red.

Figure 2.8. NM Governor Candidate Contributions Raised 2014-2022



Geography and Political Sorting

The state is politically divided geographically between rural and urban counties and between Northern and Southern NM counties. Therefore, like other states, NM is sorted into political preferences by region. Americans have been sorting into more homogeneous political communities for nearly 4 decades.²⁰ The effect of this is that Americans are increasingly living in landslide counties, which are usually defined as counties where the difference between the Democratic and Republican presidential candidate is greater than +/- 20%.

In 2020, 58% of Americans lived in counties that were considered red or blue landslides²¹ and we repeat our graph from the 2020 NM presidential contest below.²² Figure 2.9 shows the difference in support between Biden and Trump by county within NM. A positive number indicates a Democratic or blue victory; a dark blue bar represents a landslide (20% or more) county and a light blue bar represents non-landslide counties (<20%). Conversely, negative numbers represent GOP victories; red bars represent a GOP landslide county and orange bars represent GOP leaning, but non-landslide counties.

Seventy percent of NM counties are landslide counties, and nearly 2/3 (66%) of 2020 voters live in a landslide county. Forty-five percent of voters live in blue counties, while 21% live in red counties. About 1/3 (34%) of voters live in a non-landslide county.

Figure 2.9. Sorting in NM Counties: Dem Presidential Support - GOP Presidential Support

²⁰ Bill Bishop. 2008. *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded American is Tearing Us Apart*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

²¹ Bill Bishop. December 17, 2020. "For Most Americans the Local Presidential Vote Was a Landslide," *The Daily Yonder*, available at <https://dailyyonder.com/for-most-americans-the-local-presidential-vote-was-a-landslide/2020/12/17/>

²² See Atkeson and Hansen, 2022, *ibid*.

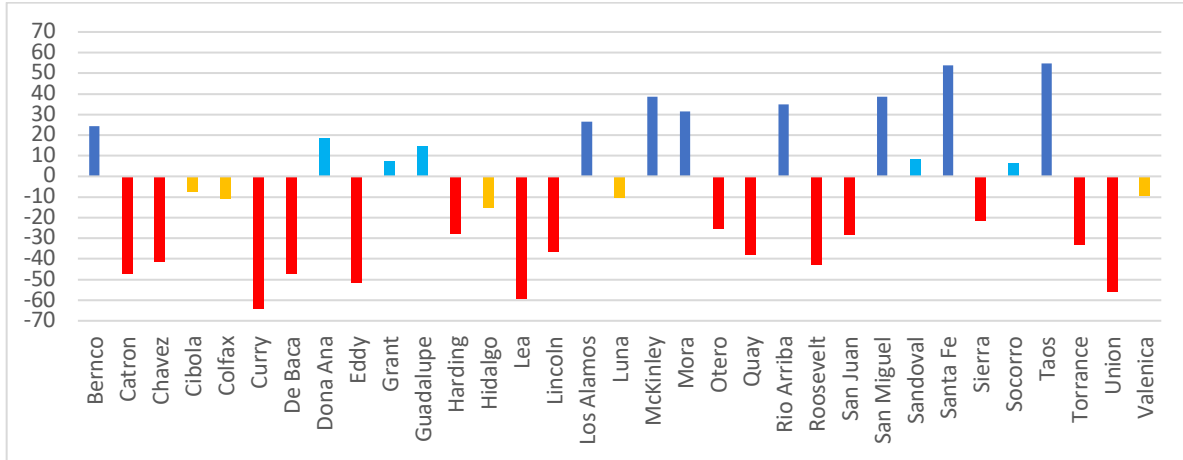
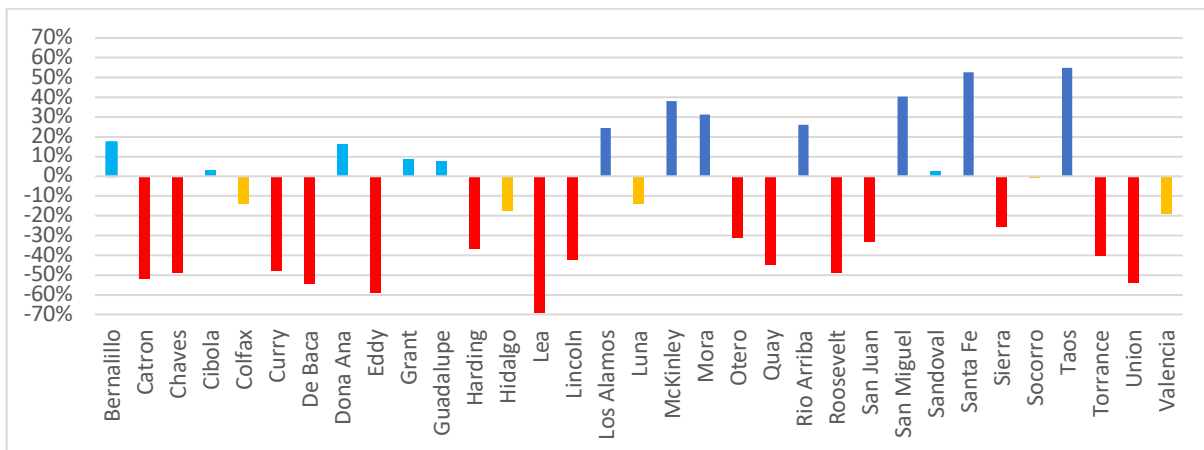


Figure 2.10 shows the comparable information for the difference in support between Grisham and Ronchetti by county. Counties that were landslide GOP counties in the 2020 presidential race were also landslide counties in the Gubernatorial contest in 2022. On the Democratic side, only Bernalillo County dropped below the 20% threshold making it a non-landslide county at 17.2%. In addition, Cibola switched support leaning slightly Democratic, while Socorro switched support to leaning slightly towards the GOP in the Gubernatorial race.

Figure 2.10. NM Counties: Dem Gubernatorial Support - GOP Gubernatorial Support



2.6. Voting Mode

COVID-19 was the defining feature of the 2020 election and affected every aspect of it. Election administrators worked hard to process absentee ballot requests and create a safe election space for in-person voting. Absentee voters, who normally make-up about 10% of all voters, tripled to over one-third (35%) of all ballots cast (see Figure 2.11). Early voting remained high, with 49% of voters choosing to vote early, while Election Day voters plummeted to only 16%. In 2022,

vote mode returned more or less to the mode we saw in 2018 before the pandemic, with Election Day voting almost identical to 2018 (36%), early voting 4 points lower (50 versus 54%) and absentee 4 points higher (14 versus 10%).

Figure 2.11. NM Voting Mode by Election Year

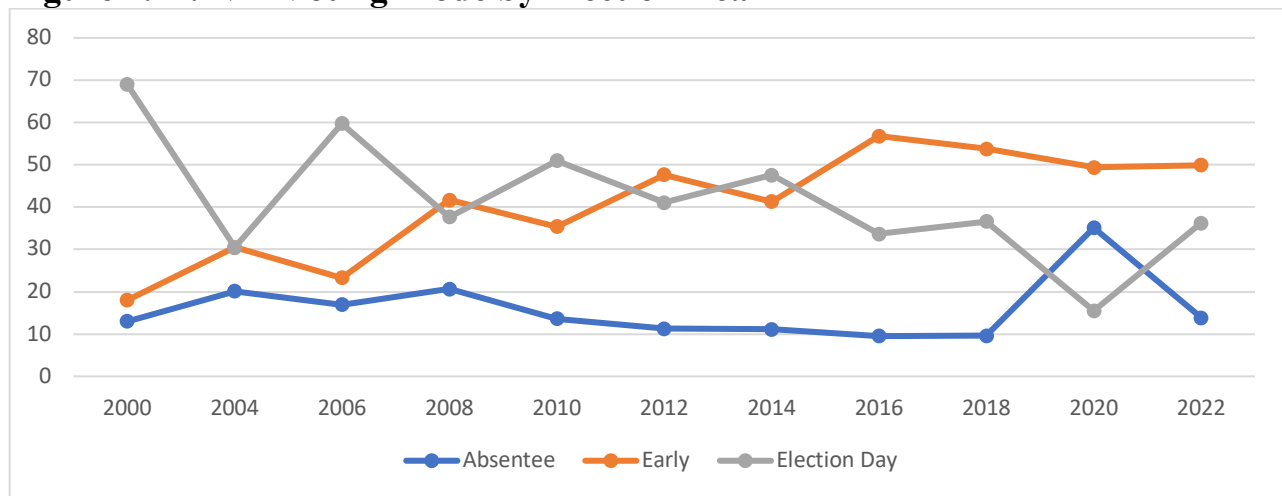
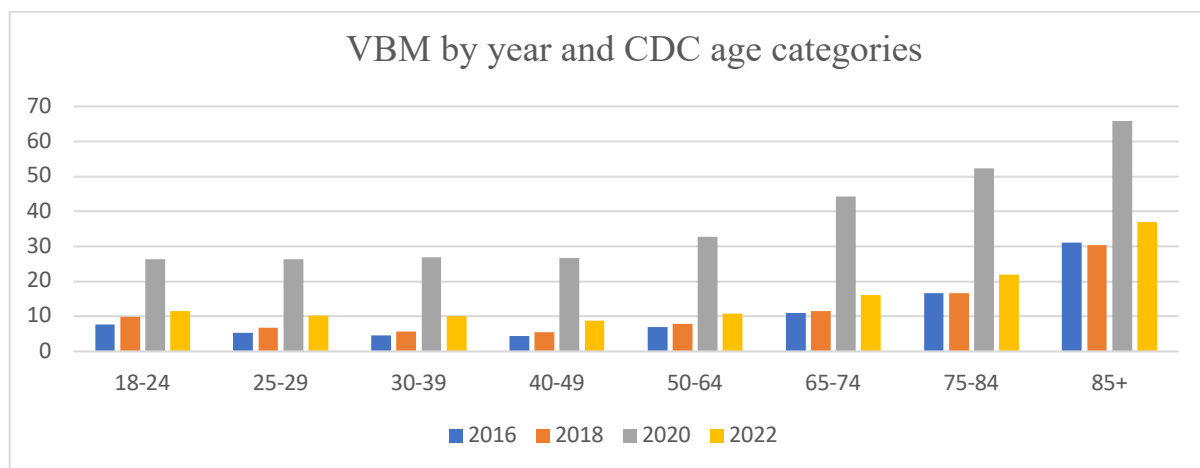


Figure 2.12 shows the relationship between age and vote mode data for 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022, providing insight on how COVID impacted whether a voter chose to VBM, in-person early, or in-person Election Day in 2020, which carried over marginally to the 2022 election. If we ignore 2020, the graph shows that VBM usage across all age groups slightly increased from 2016 and 2018 levels, which were stagnant prior to COVID. Thus, the large VBM usage in 2020 appears to have impacted some voters who likely continued the practice into 2022. The graph also shows that increasing age is always a strong predictor of voting-by-mail and monotonically increases with each age group, but the magnitude of the slope is much greater in 2020.

Figure 2.12. NM 2016-2022 VBM by CDC Age Groups



In addition to age, partisanship also affected vote mode choice. Figure 2.13 shows that Democrats were far more likely to vote-by-mail (45%) than Republicans (22%) and DTS voters (34%). In Figure 2.14 we show the breakdown of vote mode by party for 2020 and 2022. Both Figures 2.13 and 2.14 reflect the rhetoric around voting in which Democratic leaders across the country were much more likely to encourage and support vote by mail than Republican leaders.

Figure 2.13. VBM by Party 2016-2022

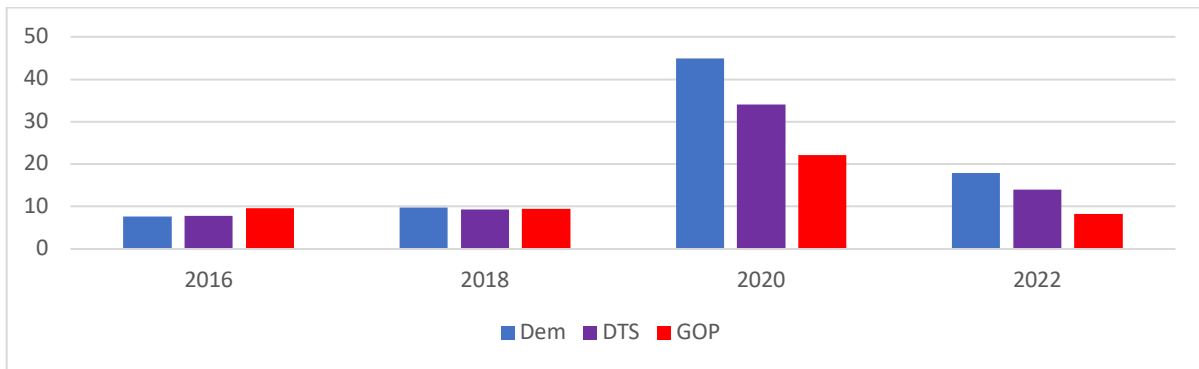
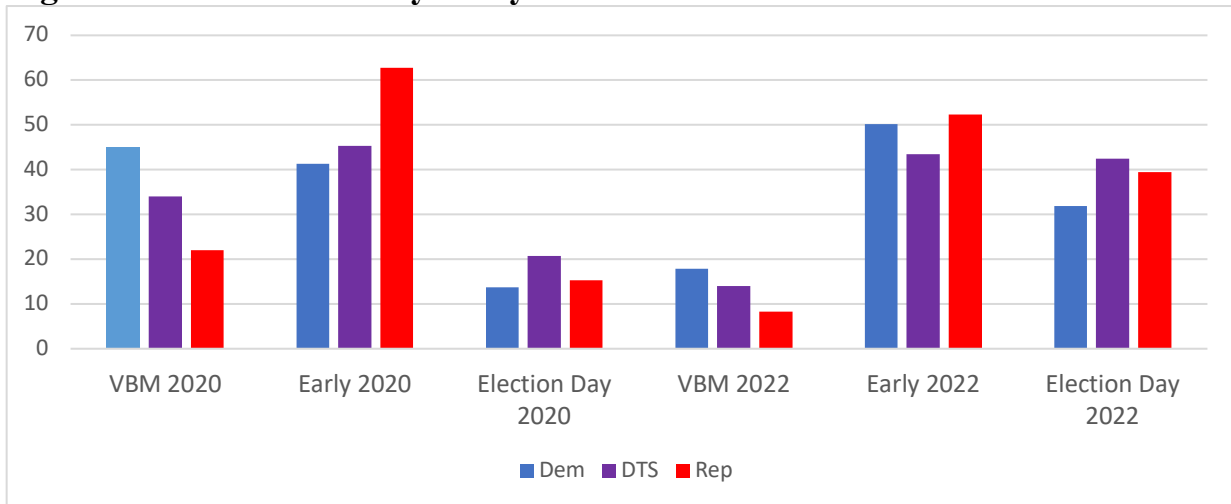


Figure 2.14. Vote Mode by Party 2020 and 2022



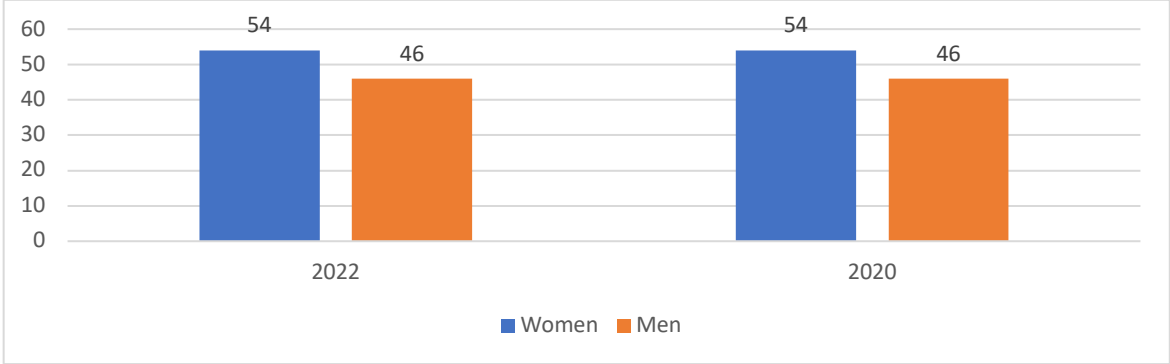
In addition, 2020 was the first year that NM implemented Same-Day Registration (SDR). Registration had to take place at the county clerk’s office, which likely limited its overall use, but SDR was very popular and registered 11,449 new voters in 2020 and 10,694 new voters in 2022. Registration patterns were different from what we see among registered voters at large. In 2020, 34% of same day registrants identified with the Democratic Party, while 43% identified as GOP and 23% identified as Libertarian/DTS/other. In 2022, 45.4% of same day registrants identified with the Democratic Party, while 35.2% identified as GOP and 19.4% identified as Libertarian/DTS/other. The 2022 pattern was much more consistent with party registration across the state than it was in 2020.

2.7. Demographics of Voters

In NM, women make up the majority of voters, see Figure 2.15. In both 2022 and 2020 women made up 54% of voters while men were only 46%. This represents a discrepancy from the voter

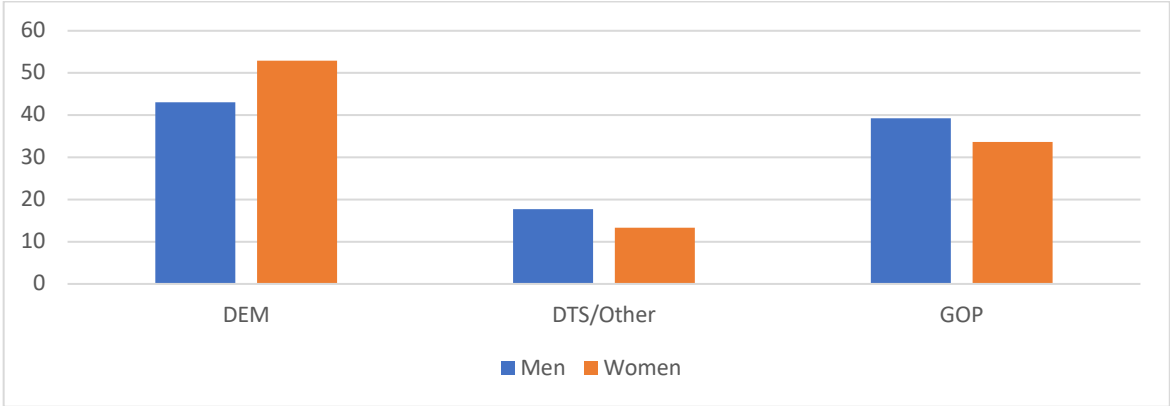
registration file, as women make up 53%, and men make-up 47% of registered voters. National data suggests NM’s gender imbalance is in the same direction as national trends, but the gap is slightly larger in NM.

Figure 2.15. NM Gender & Turnout 2022 & 2020



As seen in Figure 2.16, women are also far more likely to belong to the Democratic Party than men; 53% of women and 43% of men identify as Democrats (10-point difference), while 34% of women and 39% of men identify as Republicans (5-point difference). Eighteen percent of men identify as DTS, compared to 13% of women. This is also comparable to national data, which shows that women are more likely to identify as Democrats (53%) than men (42%) and men are more likely to be Republicans (56%) than women (45%).²³

Figure 2.16. 2022 NM Registered Voters: Party by Gender



In terms of age, 2022 saw a decrease in turnout of younger voters compared to 2020 (Figure 2.17). Those aged 18-29 made up 9% of voters, a 4-point decrease from 2020. Those from 30-44 also decreased, but only 2-points from 21% to 19%. Voters aged 45-64 years old made up 34%

²³ For a good recent discussion of national trends in partisanship in turnout by gender see, Ruth Igielnik, “Men and Women in the US Continue to Differ in Voter Turnout Rate, Party Identification,” August 18, 2020, available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/08/18/men-and-women-in-the-u-s-continue-to-differ-in-voter-turnout-rate-party-identification/>

in 2020, rising to 35% in 2022, while those 65 and over saw the largest increase from 31% in 2020 to 38% in 2022.

Figure 2.17. NM 2018, 2020 & 2022 Turnout by Age

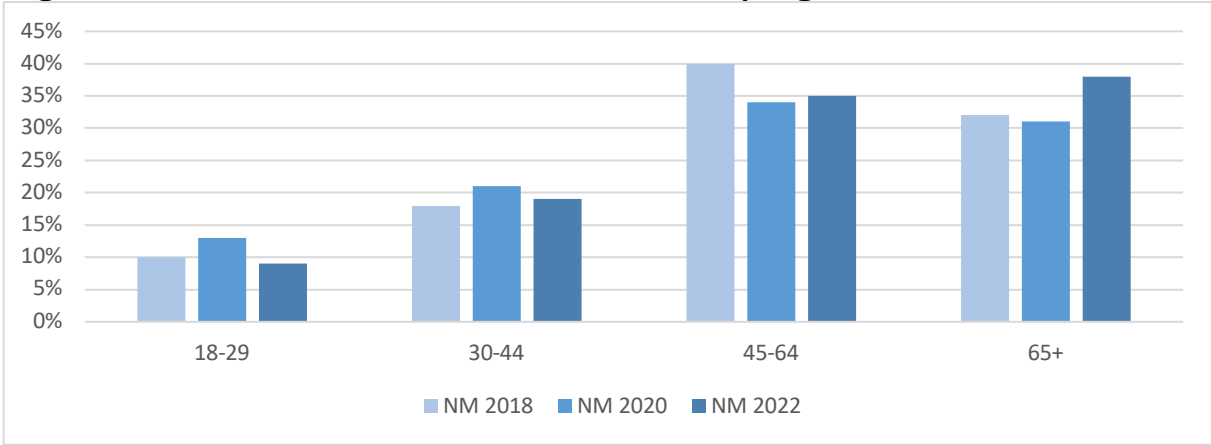
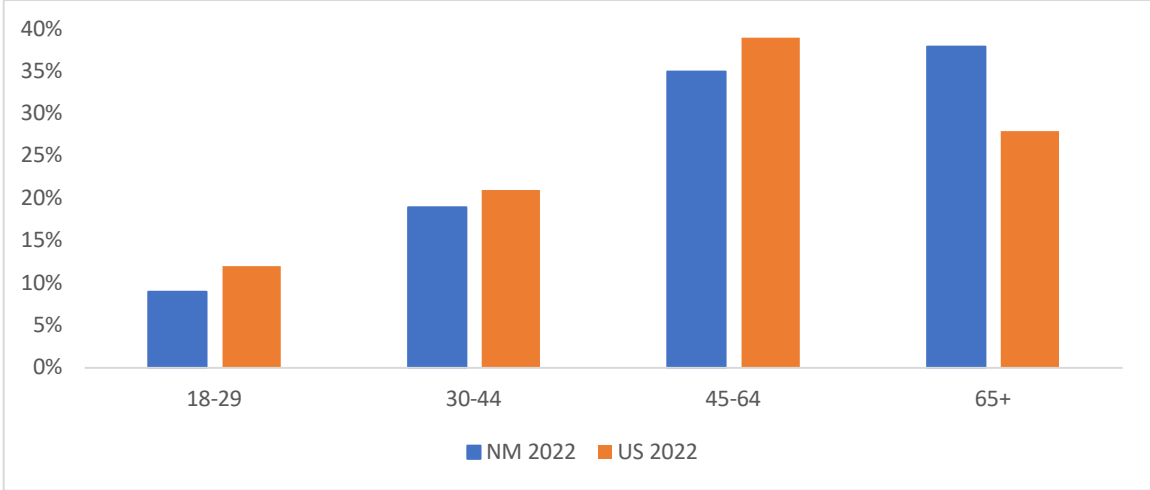


Figure 2.18 compares NM voter turnout by age nationally. It shows that NM turnout was lower for all age groups except 65 and over, where this group contributed much more to the make-up of the NM electorate than they did nationally in both 2020 and 2022. This suggests that NM voters are older, on average, than voters nationally.

Figure 2.18. NM Age and Turnout 2022 Compared to US Exit Poll data



CHAPTER 3. VOTER EXPERIENCES WITH THE VOTING PROCESS AND VOTER CONFIDENCE

The voter experience is a key lens to understand and explore the election ecosystem. It provides evidence on the effectiveness and efficiency of election administration procedures and processes. The voter experience can influence voter confidence in the voting process and ultimately helps to determine the success or failure of an election. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to gain an understanding of how voters feel about their voting experience and use their experience to inform and improve future elections.

Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 analyzes responses to a 2022 postelection survey of NM voters that collected data about voter experiences with the election process. Our sample consisted of 2,515 respondents.

The 2022 NM Election Study (NMES) is the ninth post-election survey of voters in New Mexico focusing on election administration and election security. This effort represents a unique, continuous time-series of a state election administration unit, which is unparalleled. Beginning in 2006, we surveyed voters in the 1st Congressional District (CD1), which encompasses 95% of Bernalillo County. In 2008, 2010, 2016, 2018, and 2020, we surveyed voters statewide. In 2012 and 2014, we surveyed voters in Bernalillo County only. The NMES provides us with cross-sectional time-series data on NM voters, allowing us to compare voter attitudes and experiences over time, and provides us with an extended look at a variety of election administration issues. Therefore, wherever we can, we include over-time information on changes in NM attitudes and experiences with their election ecosystem.

NM was one of the first states to switch from DRE machines without a paper trail to a unified paper ballot system in 2006. NM used ES&S tabulators from 2005 until 2014 when the state switched to Dominion vote tabulators. The state began experimenting with vote centers in 2014, allowing voters to vote at any voting location in their county. By 2020 all counties had moved to a vote center model. In 2020, NM adopted same-day registration; it will adopt Election Day registration in 2024.

In 2022, NM voters could vote in person from October 11 through Election Day, November 8. Voters could request and vote a mail ballot or vote in person at any vote center in their county through Election Day.

This chapter has the following four sections:

- Section 3.1 examines the voter experience for vote-by-mail (VBM) voters.
- Section 3.2 discusses in-person voter experiences.
- Section 3.3 discusses voter identification practices and experiences for in-person voters.
- Section 3.4 examines voter confidence at multiple levels of election administration, including the voter's ballot at their vote center, the ballots in the county, the state, and the nation.

3.1 Vote-by-Mail

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, absentee voting comprised about 10% of voters, a figure that rose to 35% in 2020. In 2022, this figure dropped to 14%.

Confidence in Vote-by-Mail

Twenty-two percent of voters indicated they chose to VBM in 2020 because of COVID. In 2022, 18% cited concern about COVID as their reason for choosing VBM. The majority (69%) cited convenience as the reason for voting by mail, while other reasons for voting by mail included a physical disability (18%), being out of town (11%), other obligations on Election Day (11%), being in the armed forces/out of state (4%), and being a poll worker (1%). Nine percent of voters cited other reasons for choosing VBM.

Among the respondents who chose to vote by mail in 2022, 91% said they voted by mail in a previous election. The vast majority of VBM respondents (90%) said they had requested their ballots before October 15, two weeks before the deadline, and 95% said they completed their ballots alone. The 5% who did not complete their ballots alone, said they did so with their spouse or partner (80%), their parent or parents (5%), or their children (2%).

In New Mexico, ballots must be returned by 7pm on Election Day. Table 3.1 shows that 6% of respondents said they returned their ballots on Election Day, while 8% returned them more than 30 days before Election Day. One-fourth of voters returned their ballots in the week before Election Day, and 33% returned them between one and two weeks before Election Day.

Table 3.1. When did you return your mail ballot?

After Election Day	0%
On Election Day	6%
1-7 days before Election Day	25%
8-14 days before Election Day	33%
15-30 days before Election Day	24%
More than 30 days before Election Day	8%
Don't know	4%

Returning VBM Ballots

Voters can return completed VBM ballots by mail, or by dropping them off at the county clerk's office, a vote center, or a designated drop box. If the voter cannot drop off or deliver the ballot themselves, it must be delivered by an immediate family member (NMSA section 1-6-9.4a). Since 2019, the language of the statute indicates that it is a “violation of law for any person who is not an immediate family member to collect and deliver a ballot.” The outside envelope of VBM ballots has a place for voters to indicate if they are not returning their ballot and to indicate the relationship to the voter of the person delivering the ballot.

To determine how voters returned their ballot, we asked the following three questions: (1) “Who returned your ballot or dropped it in the mail?” (2) “Did you return someone else’s ballot?”, and if they returned another voter’s ballot, (3) “Whose ballot did you return?”

- Nearly nine in ten (88%) voters returned their own ballots, through the mail, a dropbox, hand-delivery, or email.
- About one in ten (11%) had a family member return their ballot.
- Three voters reported having a friend return their ballot and one voter reported a caregiver.
- 12% of voters (N=71) reported returning someone else's ballot.
 - Of those who returned someone else’s ballot, two-thirds (66%) returned their spouse’s ballot, while 24% said they returned their parent’s ballot.
 - 2% indicated that they returned their child’s ballot.
 - 15% reported returning another family member’s ballot, while none reported returning a friend’s ballot.
 - We also asked voters that returned someone else’s ballot, “How many ballots did you return?” Over 9 in 10 (92%) returned one or two ballots, while less than one in ten (7%) returned 3, and 1% returned 4.

These data suggest that about 99% of voters either returned their ballot themselves or had a family member do so.

Ways of Returning an Absentee Ballot

To return their VBM ballots, voters could mail them through the USPS with a postage-paid envelope, hand-deliver them to the county clerk’s office or a polling location or drop them off at a drop-box, or for UOCAVA voters return them by email. To ascertain the usefulness of these methods, we asked, “How did you return your ballot?” Table 3.2 displays the results.

- 30% of voters dropped their ballot off at USPS, while 28% had a postal worker pick it up at their home.
- Fewer voters reported dropping it off at a post office box not located at a USPS post office (10%), a ballot drop box (5%), an Early Voting Center (9%), the County Clerk’s office (7%), or at a Voting Center on Election Day (5%).
- 4% reported emailing their ballot.

Table 3.2. How did you return your ballot?

At a post office box at a U.S. Postal Service location	30%
At an official post office box not at a U.S. Postal Service location	10%
It was picked up by the postal worker who delivers mail to my home	28%
A drop box used only for ballots	5%
I dropped it off at the Early Voting Center office during early voting	9%
I dropped it off at the County Clerk’s office	7%
I dropped it off on Election Day at a vote center or the election supervisor’s office	5%
I emailed my ballot	4%
Other (please specify)	2%

We asked voters who dropped off their ballots, “Why did you decide to drop off your ballot rather than mail the ballot back in?” (see Table 3.3).

- The most common answers were wanting to be certain that it arrived (28%) and it being convenient to drop off (23%). We found Republicans (67%) were more likely to indicate that they wanted to be certain that their ballots arrived, than Democrats (25%) or Independents (28%).
- Others reported dropping off their ballots because they did not have enough time to utilize USPS (19%) or did not trust the USPS to deliver it on time (13%).

Table 3.3. Why did you decide to drop off your ballot rather than mail the ballot back in? Please mark all that apply.

It was very convenient to drop it off	23%
I didn't trust the USPS to deliver it on time	13%
I didn't have enough time to use the USPS for return delivery	19%
I wanted to be certain that it arrived	28%
Other (please specify)	1%

Most voters who dropped off their ballots reported that it was very easy (84%) or fairly easy (11%) to find the drop-off location.

We also asked voters about activities (see Table 3.4) that they might have observed at drop box locations. We found that 4% reported observing people peacefully holding signs or giving out literature. But almost no one reported seeing individuals or groups behaving in a disruptive manner. A majority (55%) reported that they did not observe any of these activities.

Table 3.4. When you returned your ballot to a drop box, did you directly observe any of the following events taking place near it? Mark all that apply.

People peacefully holding signs or giving out literature in support of a candidate or ballot question	4%
Individuals or groups of people casting doubt on whether the election was fraudulent	0%
Individuals or groups of people seeming to challenge whether some people were properly dropping off ballots	0%
Individuals or groups, other than police officers, carrying a gun	0%
Someone taking pictures of voters or election workers who DID NOT seem to be a reporter	0%
Anything else that seemed disruptive	1%
I didn't observe any of these things	55%

Ballot Tracking

To provide more information to voters, New Mexico hosts an online voter portal in which voters can track their mail ballots.

Amid on-going allegations of a “stolen” election in 2020, one-third of vote by mail voters in 2022 said that they tracked their mail ballot. Among the reasons given for tracking their ballots, as shown in Table 3.5, 55% said the 2022 election was too important to risk their ballot being rejected, 38% were concerned about their ballot being lost in the mail, 17% cited being automatically signed up for ballot tracking, and 7% cited concern over rejection of their ballot. Twenty-one percent cited other reasons, including curiosity, confirmation, and trust issues.

Table 3.5. Which of the following describes the reason you chose to track your ballot? Please mark all that apply.

I believed the 2022 election was too important to risk my ballot being rejected	55%
I was concerned my ballot would be lost in the mail	38%
I was automatically signed up for ballot tracking	17%
I was concerned my ballot would be rejected	7%
Other, please describe why you chose to track your ballot	21%

Table 3.6 provides reasons why respondents did not track their ballots. Among the reasons for not tracking, 55% cited a belief that their ballot would be received and counted, while 37% said that they were not aware that they could track their ballot, and 5% were concerned that their contact information would be used for non-election purposes. A very small percent did not feel comfortable tracking their ballot information (1%) or did not care if their ballot was rejected or did not arrive on time (1%). We found Democrats (81%) and Independents (55%) were much more likely to mark that they fully trusted that their ballot would be received and counted than Republicans (11%).

Table 3.6. Which of the following describes the reason you chose NOT to track your ballot? Please mark all that apply.

I fully trusted my ballot would be received and counted by the election	55%
I was not aware that I could track my ballot	37%
I was worried my contact information would be used for non-election purposes	5%
I did not feel comfortable tracking my ballot information online or through text messages	1%
I did not care if my ballot was rejected or did not arrive on time	1%
Other, please describe why you chose NOT to track your ballot	14%

Given the overall popularity among those who used it and the fact that over a third of voters who did not track their ballots did not do so because they did not realize it was an option, *we recommend expanding the program and communicating with voters about tracking to sign up more VBM voters and help to build trust in the system.*

Ballot Issues

Most voters seemed to have positive experiences engaging with their ballots. A vast majority (97%) found the instructions to cast and return their ballots to be very easy (75%) or somewhat easy (22%) to follow. No voters found the process very hard. Only 3% found it somewhat hard. Ninety-nine percent of voters were not contacted by election officials because of a problem with their ballots; among the 1% that were, 100% said the problem was resolved.

As shown in Table 3.7, we found that only 2% of voters strongly agreed with the statement, my ballot was too long. Another 21% somewhat agreed that it was too long. Ballot privacy was questioned by some. Fourteen percent of voters said they somewhat or strongly disagreed that their ballot choices were kept private at home, but fewer, 9%, had a similar concern when their vote was counted by election officials. Thus, voters feel less privacy when voting than when their ballot is being counted.

Table 3.7. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your mail ballot:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
My ballot was too long	2%	21%	35%	42%
My ballot choices were kept private at home	74%	12%	6%	8%
My ballot privacy was maintained when my vote was counted	69%	22%	5%	4%

3.2 Early and Election Day Voter Experience

Wait times and line length were addressed in *The American Voting Experience: Report and Recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Election Administration*.²⁴ The commission

²⁴ See https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/eac_assets/1/6/Amer-Voting-Exper-final-draft-01-09-14-508.pdf

recommended that no voter wait in line longer than 30 minutes. In the 2020 general election, long lines were commonplace nationally due to social distancing and COVID-19 protocols. The CDC recommended that voters switch to early voting to ensure that they could vote and prevent long lines on Election Day, which many voters chose to do.²⁵

We asked voters how many minutes they waited in line before they were able to vote, the results are shown in Table 3.8.

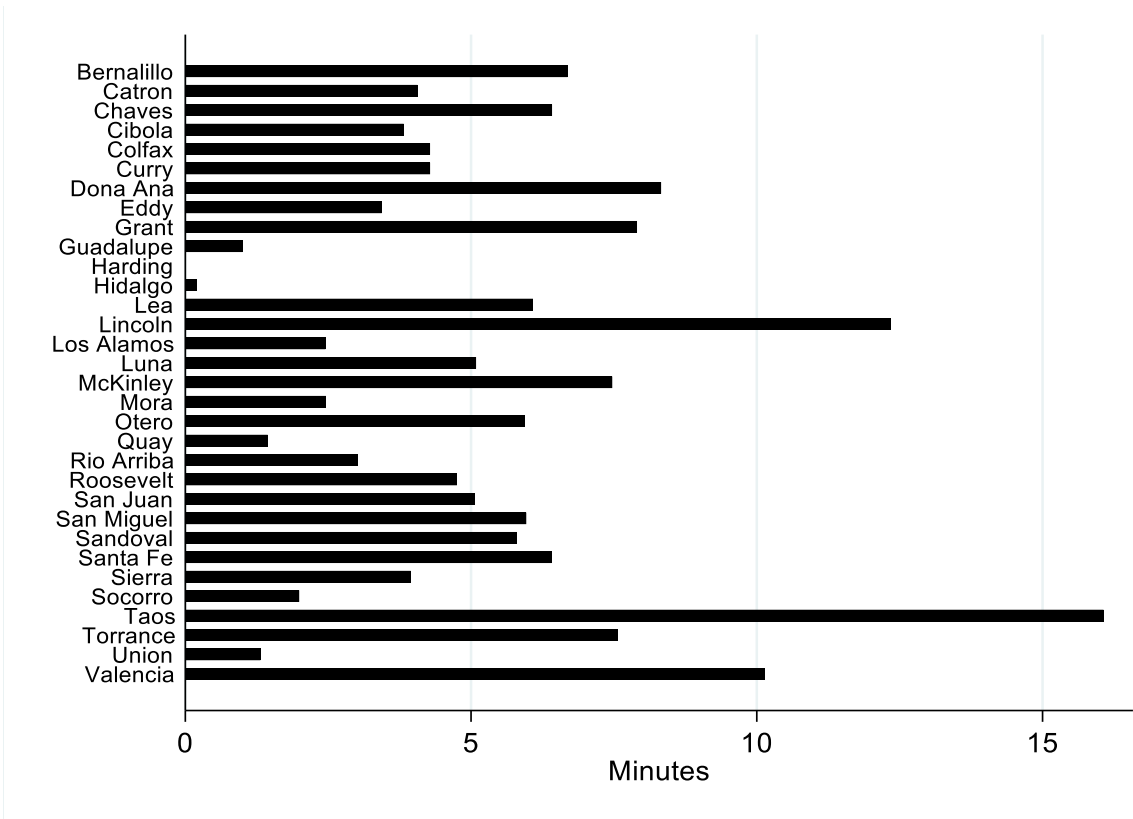
- NM in-person voters, on average, reported waiting about 7 minutes to vote. This is much shorter than voters waiting in line in 2020, which took an average of 20 minutes.
- In NM, Election Day voters were in line for more extended periods than early voters, 10 minutes versus 4 minutes. In 2020 early voting took, on average, 22 minutes, and Election Day voting lines averaged 13 minutes.
- Our data suggest that only 5% of voters stayed in line longer than 20 minutes.
- Average wait times also varied by county as shown in Figure 3.1. Only three counties had average line lengths greater than 10 minutes. These include Lincoln, Taos and Valencia. About half (16) of the counties had average wait times less than 5 minutes.

Table 3.8. About how many minutes did you wait in line in this election before you were able to vote?

Minutes	In-Person Voters
0 Minutes	19%
1-5 Minutes	57%
6-10 Minutes	11%
11-15 Minutes	4%
16-20 Minutes	4%
21-40 Minutes	3%
41-120 Minutes	2%
Average	6.5 min

²⁵ See Atkeson LR, Hansen WL, Oliver MT, Maestas CD, Weimer EC. 2022. “Should I vote-by-mail or in person? The impact of COVID-19 risk factors and partisanship on vote mode decisions in the 2020 presidential election.” *PLoS ONE* 17(9): e0274357. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274357>

Figure 3.1. Average Wait Times for In-Person Voting by County



We also asked voters their perception of the time it took to vote, “Did you consider the overall wait time at the vote center to be: no wait time, short wait time, moderate wait time, [or] long wait time?” (see Table 3.9).

- 59% of voters indicated their wait time to be “no wait time,” while 29% reported a short wait time.
- 10% indicated a moderate wait and only 2% indicated a long wait time.
- For comparison, in 2020, 35% indicated there was no wait time, 35% indicated it was a short wait, 24% indicated it was moderate, and 6% indicated it was long. Clearly, voters spent far less time in line in 2022 than in 2020.

Table 3.9. Did you consider the overall wait time at the vote center or polling location to be:

No wait time	59%
Short wait time	29%
Moderate wait time	10%
Long wait time	2%

Voter Interactions with Poll Workers and Other Voters: Privacy and Safety in the Polling Location

Poll locations and poll worker-voter interactions are necessary for the smooth running of an election. Voters in New Mexico will visit a voting convenience center instead of a voting precinct. Vote centers, known in New Mexico as voting convenience centers (VCCs), are large areas with plenty of parking to facilitate a high volume of voters at once. Additionally, it is important that poll worker interactions be positive for the voter to build confidence in their vote being counted correctly. In most voting locations in New Mexico, poll workers are given specific responsibilities and are typically trained for that position.

- To assess general attitudes toward poll workers, we asked voters their level of agreement with the statement, "The poll workers were helpful." We found 96% of voters agreed with this statement, with 64% strongly agreeing and 32% somewhat agreeing. This is a small increase from 2020 when 94% of voters agreed.
- We also asked in-person voters whether poll workers looked at their ballot during their voting experience. We found that 7% of voters reported a poll worker looking at their ballot, an increase from 5% in 2020. We found Republicans (12%) and Independents (16%) were more likely to report a poll worker looking at their ballot than Democrats (3%).
- To assess ballot privacy in the polling place, we also asked whether or not someone in line asked them their vote choice. Only 1% of voters answered yes, a decrease from 2% in 2020.
- Finally, many voting locations offer a privacy sleeve to voters to secure their ballot when they move about the vote center. We have found previously that a privacy sleeve helps increase voter confidence since it protects ballot privacy, which correlates with higher voter confidence. Yet, only about one in four (24%) voters used a privacy sleeve. Although this is an increase from 20% in 2020, *we recommend that the NM SOS continue to encourage voting locations across the state to adopt voter privacy sleeves for in-person voting.* Voters desire privacy and it helps them feel more positive about their voting experience.

Finding Voting Convenience Centers (VCC)

Despite fewer polling locations in a VCC environment, voters do not appear to be inconvenienced in terms of voting locations. Early and Election Day voters reported that they quickly found their voting location. These voters were asked to strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statement, "The location was easy to find."

- 77% of voters strongly agreed that their polling location was easy to find, an increase from 72% in 2020. And an additional 20% agreed that the site was easy to find, compared to 25% in 2020.
- There were no significant differences by partisan groups, vote mode, ethnicity, age, or education. All groups of voters were able to find their polling location easily.

- Like 2020, we find that the vast majority of voters (93%) did not feel they had to go far out of their way to vote.

Parking Problems

We found that most voters did not have problems parking during early or Election Day voting. We asked early and Election Day voters to agree or disagree with the statement, “It was hard to find a place to park.”

- 93% of voters found parking easy at their polling location, compared to 90% in 2020.
- There were no significant differences between vote mode (early vs. Election Day), gender, partisan groups, age, education levels, or racial groups regarding parking access.

3.3. Voter Identification for In-Person Voters

Beginning in 2006, survey data showed that the voter identification law was not uniformly implemented. However, in Bernalillo County, where we have looked at this issue extensively, we found that the VCC model of elections produced more uniform implementation than the precinct-based model.

The state of NM requires that voters state their name, address, birth year, or present a physical form of identification such as a voter registration card, driver's license, or utility bill. If the voter chooses to provide photographic identification, it does not have to contain their address. If they decide to use a non-photo form of identification (such as a bank statement), it must include an address, although it is not required to match the registered address on the voter rolls.

In 2022 we asked, “In New Mexico, the voter gets to choose how they want to be identified at the polls. They can provide (1) their name, address, and birth year, (2) a photo ID, or (3) a non-photo ID. What type of identification did you provide?”

- Table 3.10 shows the results for 2020 and 2022; the results are somewhat similar. In both years, about one-half of in-person voters indicated that they provided the poll worker with the minimum identification--their name, address, and birth year. However, almost one-third (30%) were asked for or provided a photo ID.
- From experience, we know that voters often get in line and pull out their driver’s license or other state-issued ID because they believe it is required, see someone else do it, or want to provide it. Therefore, we asked a follow-up question to voters who indicated they used a photo ID, "Thinking back, did a poll worker ask for a photo or non-photo ID, or did you just provide it to them without being asked?" Nearly two-thirds (63%) recalled just providing it to the poll worker without being asked, compared to 60% in 2020.

Overall, similar to 2020, in 2022 about 88% of voters correctly provided the required information/identification, or voluntarily offered a photo ID without being improperly asked. About 10% said that the poll worker incorrectly asked for a photo ID, and about 2% provided a photo ID but did not remember if it was requested or volunteered.

Table 3.10. What type of identification did you provide?

	2020	2022
Name, address, and birth year	50%	52%
A photo ID (driver's license, military ID, or passport)	31%	30%
Voter Registration Card/County Bar Code	14%	14%
Other form of identification	0%	3%
Photo ID	31%	30%
Poll Worker asked for the Photo ID	30%	29%
I just provided it to the poll worker	60%	63%
I don't remember	10%	8%

3.4. Voter Confidence

A democratic society requires a high level of voter confidence to function. Voter confidence is the belief that electoral processes are fair and legitimate. Even if citizens are unhappy with their leaders, they should have confidence that the process that placed those individuals into power was fair. This assurance enables citizens to have faith in the democratic system and to participate in future elections.

We focus on four levels of voter confidence.

- We asked an independent question, "How confident are you that YOUR vote in the General Election was counted as you intended?" Response options were "very confident", "somewhat confident", "not too confident" and "not at all confident." The personal vote is the most essential level of voter confidence because it represents how voters feel about their voting experience and its accuracy.
- The second level is voter confidence in the county's election system and was placed in a grid format with the other two remaining levels of voter confidence. The county is the primary administrative unit of the state. It is responsible for all matters related to election administration, including poll worker training, logic and accuracy testing of the tabulating machines, the counting of ballots, the qualification of provisional ballots, the qualification of absentee ballots, the county canvass, etc.
- The third level is confidence in the process at the state level, aggregating how voters feel about the election process within their larger election administrative unit.
- The fourth level is the confidence that all the ballots were counted correctly nationwide and aggregates how voters feel about the election process across many elections' administrative units.

The results are presented in Table 3.11 and show both the frequency of response and the confidence averages across levels of administration for each voting mode (Election Day, early, and absentee) and by party. The variables are coded on a 4-point scale, from 1 to 4, so a higher average indicates greater confidence. The results show that voters are confident that their votes were counted correctly.

- On the question of confidence in YOUR vote, 65% of votes were very confident compared to 56% in 2020. 20% were somewhat confident, compared to 21% in 2020. Only 15% were not too (8%) or not at all (7%) confident.
- Similar results are seen for county-level voter confidence, with 82% of voters indicating they are very (57%) or somewhat (25%) confident, compared to 74% in 2020. Only 18% reported being not too (10%) or not at all (8%) confident, compared to 26% in 2020. Nevertheless, this is, on average, less confident than results at the personal level.
- Most (50%) of voters indicated they were very confident of state-level results, compared to 51% in 2020. Another 25% were somewhat confident, compared to 19% in 2020. The remaining 25% were not too (14%) or not at all (11%) confident, compared to 29% in 2020. Overall, confidence in state results increased from 2020 to 2022.
- Voters were least confident of the nationwide results, with about three in five (64%) voters indicating they are very (40%) or somewhat (24%) confident. This is an increase from 59% in 2020. About one-third of voters (36%) indicated they are not too (19%) or not at all confident (17%). This is a decrease from 41% in 2020. Overall, confidence in national results increased from 2020 to 2022.

Table 3.11. County, State, and National Voter Confidence

	Your Vote	Votes in your county	Votes in your state	Votes nationwide
Frequency				
(4) Very confident	65%	57%	50%	40%
(3) Somewhat confident	20%	25%	25%	24%
(2) Not too confident	8%	10%	14%	19%
(1) Not at all confident	7%	8%	11%	17%
Averages (1-4)				
Overall Average	3.4	3.3	3.2	2.9
Early voters	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.0
Absentee voters	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.3
Election Day voters	3.2	3.1	2.9	2.6
Democrats	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.6
Independents/DTS	3.1	3.0	2.8	2.6
Republicans	2.9	2.7	2.4	2.0

In 2022, 20% of Democrats and 12% of Independents voted by mail, while only 6% of Republicans did so. While early voting percentages were similar (51% for Democrats, 49% for Independents, 49% for Republicans), Election Day voting differed dramatically by party—29% for Democrats, 39% for Independents, and 45% for Republicans. Because Democrats were more likely to vote by mail and because their candidate won the governor contest we can see how the winner effect manifests itself across vote mode. Consequently, VBM voters have the highest confidence level, while Election Day voters are the least confident.

- For example, the average Democratic voter, whose party won the 2020 presidential election, evaluated personal voter confidence at a high 3.9 on a 4-point scale, the equivalent of “very confident.” Thus, on average, Democrats appear very confident their ballot was counted correctly.
- On the other hand, the average personal voter confidence for Republicans was 2.9 on our 4-point scale.
- The personal confidence among Independents was 3.1 on our 4-point scale.

We see a drop in nationwide voter confidence among all partisan and vote-mode groups.

- Democrats’ confidence only slightly drops, moving from an average of 3.9 at a personal level to 3.6 at the national level.
- The drop in Independents’ confidence was more significant, resulting in an average .5 gap from 3.1 to 2.6.
- Republican voters drop was, by far, the most substantial, moving from 2.9 to 2.0, a nearly one-point decline.

Finally, we examine the correlations between voter demographics and voter confidence.

- In terms of race, there were some differences. 70% of white voters reported feeling very confident that their vote was counted as intended, compared to only 58% of Hispanic voters (see Table 3.12).
- There were slight differences in gender, with 67% of women and 61% of men feeling very confident that their vote was counted as intended.
- There were slight differences by age, with most 18-40 (69%) and 65+ (71%) year-olds feeling very confident, but only 57% of voters aged 41-64- feeling very confident. Middle aged voters (41-64) were the least confident, with 10% of voters not confident at all and 11% not too confident that their votes were counted as intended. In comparison, only 5% of younger voters and 4% of older voters were not confident at all, and 7% of younger and 6% of older voters were not too confident (see Table 3.13).
- College-educated voters reported feeling very confident at much higher rates (74%) than those without a college education (59%).

Table 3.12. How confident are you that your ballot was counted as intended? By Race

Response	White	Hispanic	Other
Very confident	70%	58%	58%
Somewhat confident	20%	19%	24%
Not too confident	7%	11%	10%
Not at all confident	4%	12%	7%

Table 3.13. How confident are you that your ballot was counted as intended? By Age Groups

Response	18 to 40	41 to 64	65+
Very confident	69%	57%	71%
Somewhat confident	19%	22%	19%
Not too confident	7%	11%	6%
Not at all confident	5%	10%	4%

CHAPTER 4. BELIEFS ABOUT BALLOT PRIVACY, POSSIBILITY OF VOTER COERCION, FRAUD, AND ATTITUDES TOWARD ELECTION REFORMS

This chapter focuses on voters' attitudes toward their ballot, fraud, and election reform. This is the second year we have explored voters' attitudes toward ballot privacy and voter coercion. We have explored attitudes toward voter fraud since 2008 and, where possible, we compare attitudes in 2022 with attitudes in previous elections to help us understand consistency and change.

- In section 4.1 we focus on whether voters feel their ballot is kept private and how willing they are to tell others their vote choice.
- In Section 4.2 we examine beliefs about voter fraud.
- In Section 4.3 we look at attitudes toward voter identification laws.
- In Section 4.4 we examine attitudes toward various election reforms including permanent VBM elections, 4-digit social security identification, machine versus hand counts, and post-election audits.

4.1 Ballot Privacy

Central to American elections are notions that a voter's ballot is secret and that who they voted for is private. Secrecy and privacy help prevent coercion and intimidation in voting and increase the integrity and confidence of the electoral process. Beliefs that the electoral process or outcomes are illegitimate can arise if there is a lack or perceived lack of vote secrecy and privacy.

In NM, ballot privacy is taken very seriously. VBM ballots use a double envelope so that ballot qualification and counting do not happen simultaneously. In this way, ballots are kept secret from the poll workers who qualify the ballot and the person who tabulates it. For in-person voters, privacy is also essential; poll workers who work the tabulator are also taught not to look at the ballot and instead listen for the bill or other sound from the vote tabulator. This is also why we recommend a voter privacy sleeve, which are used by most counties and vote centers. The voter privacy sleeve is a long legal-sized file folder that the voter can place their ballot into when they are moving from station to station in the polling location to ensure privacy. Once the vote is counted and in the tabulator bin, it is impossible to determine the order of ballots or to identify anyone's vote.

This year we asked a large battery of questions about ballot privacy, which we discuss below.

Voters Disclosing Their Vote

Voters have complete control over their choice to disclose who they voted for to family, friends, and others. We asked if family or friends asked them who they voted for, whether they named the candidate, and if they were truthful in disclosing who they voted for. Table 4.1 shows the frequency results.

- Only 50% of voters were at least sometimes asked by family and friends who they voted for, a decrease from 74% in 2020. The other half were rarely (29%) or never, or almost never (21%) asked, an increase from 24% in 2020. Perhaps this difference is due to the nature of presidential versus governor contests or to the special circumstances around COVID.
- When a friend or family member asked which candidate they preferred, most voters named a candidate almost all the time (48%) or most of the time (23%), the exact figures as in 2020. Fewer voters sometimes (15%), rarely (6%), or never (8%) named a candidate, also like 2020.
- An overwhelming majority of voters were truthful in naming the candidate they prefer all the time (86%) and most of the time (9%). Fewer voters are sometimes (2%), rarely (2%), or never (1%) truthful in stating the candidate they prefer.
- There are no major differences across demographic or partisan characteristics in discussing and disclosing the candidate voters preferred in an election.

Table 4.1. Percentage Being Asked and Providing Who a Voter Voted For

	All or almost all of the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Rarely	Never or almost never
Does anyone, including friends or family, ever ask you which candidates you prefer or voted for?	7%	10%	33%	29%	21%
If a friend or family member asks you who you prefer in an election, do you name a candidate?	48%	23%	15%	6%	8%
If you tell a close friend or family member which candidate you prefer, do you tell the truth?	86%	9%	2%	2%	1%

Can Others Determine Your Vote If You Do Not Disclose It?

Next, we focus on two questions that ask if voters believe that others can find out who they voted for without their disclosure of such information. We asked the following two questions:

(1) “According to the law, which candidate you vote for is supposed to be kept secret unless you tell someone. Even so, how easy, or hard do you think it would be for politicians, union officials, or the people you work for to find out who you voted for, even if you told no one?”

(2) “Do you think elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter had voted for?”

The response to these questions, shown in Table 4.2, is quite surprising, as many voters were either unsure or thought it likely that someone could find out who they voted for.

- One in five voters believe it is impossible (21%) for someone to find out who another person voted for, leaving the vast majority of voters thinking it is at least possible.
- Nearly one-third (28%) believe it somewhat or very easy.
- 9% indicated that they didn't know.
- In addition, a third of voters (33%) believed that elected officials could determine who someone voted for, and another 34% indicated they did not know if elected officials could figure out their vote. A third (33%) did not believe election officials could identify a voter's ballot.

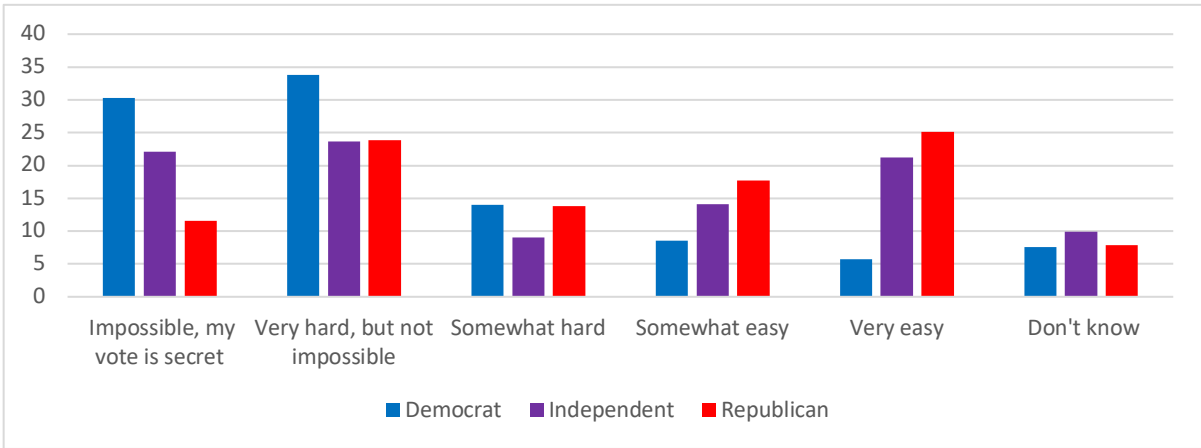
Table 4.2. Percentage Response to Two Questions about Voters' belief that others can find out who they voted for even if the voter does not disclose this information to others

According to the law, which candidate you vote for is supposed to be kept secret unless you tell someone. Even so, how easy or hard do you think it would be for politicians, union officials, or the people you work for to find out who you voted for, even if you told no one?	
Impossible, my vote is secret	21%
It would be very hard, but not impossible	29%
It would be somewhat hard	13%
It would be somewhat easy	13%
It would be very easy	15%
I don't know	9%
Do you think elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter had voted for?	
Yes	33%
No	33%
Don't know	34%

We found interesting differences among party identifiers for these questions after evaluating these responses. These results are displayed in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

- For example, more Democrats (30%) and Independents (22%) believe it is impossible for others to find out their vote compared to GOP voters (12%).
- Considering the average, we find that Democrats score 2.3, clearly on the side of it being "hard" to determine. Independents are at 3.0, or "somewhat hard," and Republicans are at 3.3, between "somewhat hard" and "somewhat easy."

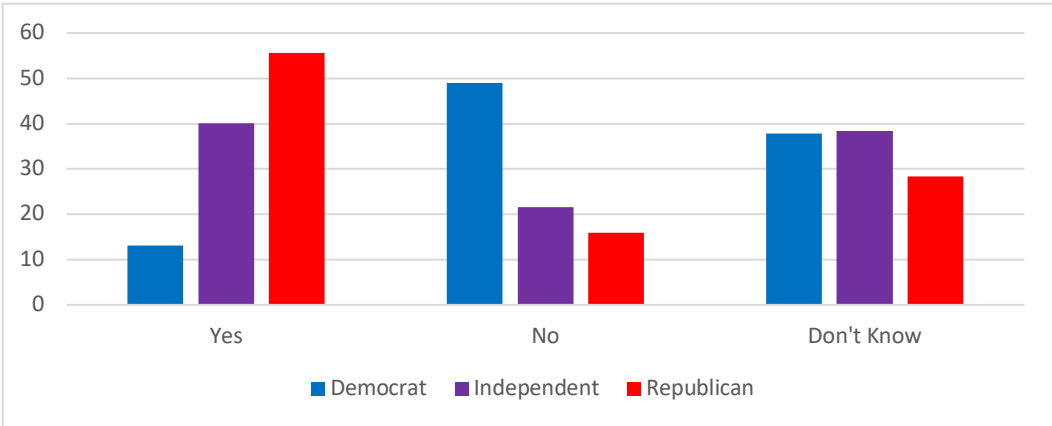
Figure 4.1. “How Easy or Hard is it For Politicians, Union Officials, or Employers to Find Out My Vote Even If I Told No One?” by Party ID



While one-third of voters believe that elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter has voted for, another one-third disagree, and another one-third indicate they don't know. The frequency hides even more interesting partisan differences.

- As can be seen in Figure 4.2, the GOP is more skeptical than other partisan groups that their vote can be kept secret from elected officials, with 56% believing that officials can access this information. Only 13% of Democrats and 40% of Independents believed the same.

Figure 4.2. Elected Officials Can Identify Vote, by Party



We hypothesized that VBM voters would be the most likely to think their vote might be identifiable, given that they include identifying references such as their signature along with their ballot and because they do not get to observe the counting process. However, we did not find this to be the case. Instead, similar to 2020, Election Day voters were the most concerned about their ballot privacy.

- 39% of Election Day voters reported election officials can figure out who a voter voted for, while 30% of early and only 25% of VBM voters feel the same way (see Figure 4.3).
- However, it is essential to note that these figures have decreased since 2020. Across all vote modes, voters are more confident that officials cannot access their vote records than in post 2020.

Figure 4.3. Elected Officials Can Identify Vote, by Vote Mode

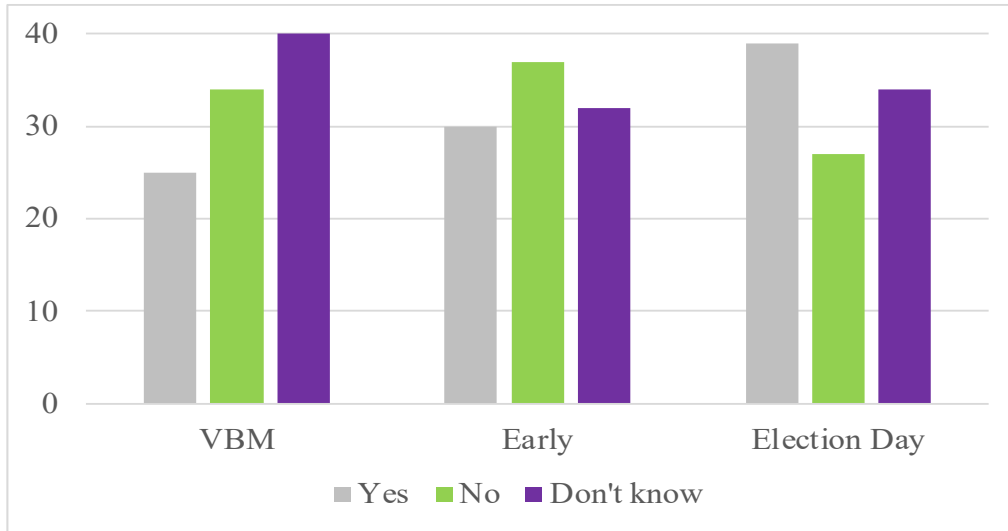
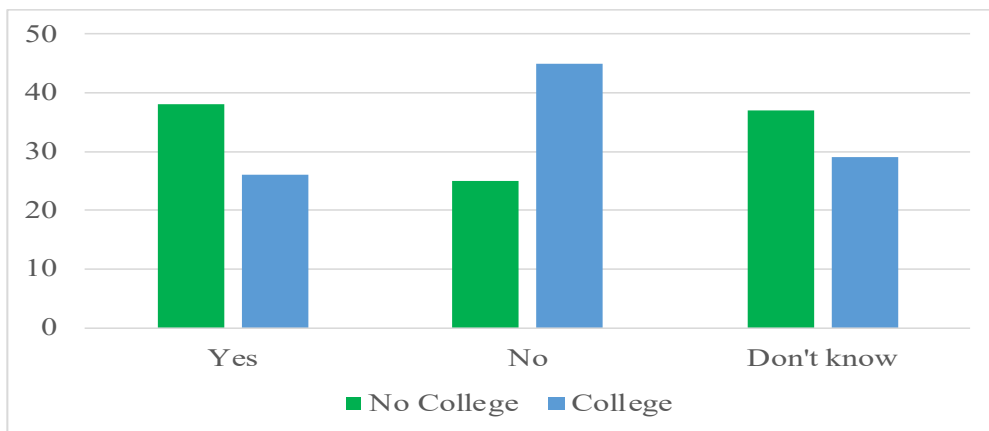


Figure 4.4 shows the same results by level of education. These responses demonstrate a divergence in confidence in the maintenance of vote privacy and ballot secrecy by elected officials. Those without a college degree are likelier to agree that elected officials could determine who they voted for, while nearly half of those with college degrees disagree.

Figure 4.4. Elected Officials Can Identify Vote, by Education



Beliefs about Election and Voter Fraud

Given the rhetoric in the last election around mail balloting, we asked several different voter fraud questions to assess NM voters' beliefs about the election and voter fraud. Some of these questions we have asked previously and, where appropriate, we bring in previous data to assess over-time trends.

Personal Observations of Fraud

The first set of questions gave voters a list of possible illegal election activities and asked voters, "Which of the following situations did you personally observe in the 2022 Midterm Election?" The situations are detailed in Table 4.3 below.

- Most NM voters (89%) indicated they did not personally witness any election fraud or irregular voting activities, an increase from 77% in 2020. 11% indicated they saw one or more election problems, a decrease from 21% in 2020.
- The most common observations were someone filling out an absentee ballot for someone else (2%), voting machines failing to record votes (2%), and someone stuffing a lot of ballots into an official ballot drop (2%).

Table 4.3. Which of the following situations did you personally observe in the 2022 Midterm Election? Please mark all that apply.

	Yes	No
Someone bribes a voter or pays for votes	1%	99%
Someone being improperly denied the chance to vote	1%	99%
Someone filling out an absentee ballot for someone else	2%	98%
Voting machines failing to record votes	2%	98%
Someone using a false identity to vote	1%	99%
Voter intimidation at the polling place	1%	99%
Someone stuffing a lot of ballots into an official ballot drop	2%	98%
Other	4%	96%
None of these	89%	11%

Belief in Frequency of Fraud

Just because voters have not witnessed unusual election activities does not mean they do not believe it happens. Therefore, in our next set of questions, we asked about the frequency of voter fraud with the following question, "Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in New Mexico. Please tell me whether you think each event occurs all or most of the time, some of the time, not much of the time, hardly ever, never, or don't know." Table 4.4 shows a detailed display of the results for different types of fraud with percentages for most to least believed.

- Among all possible activities we examined, voters were most concerned about the possibility of a non-U.S. citizen voting. Over one-third (36%) of voters believe this

happens at least some of the time--16% indicating it happens all or most of the time and 20% indicating it happens some of the time.

- Many voters also believed absentee ballots were thrown away after being submitted at least some of the time (33%) and that people submitted too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others (35%).
- Over three in ten voters believe that voters have intimidated other voters (30%), cast multiple ballots (30%), casted ballots under fake names (32%), and pretended to be another person to cast ballots (33%).

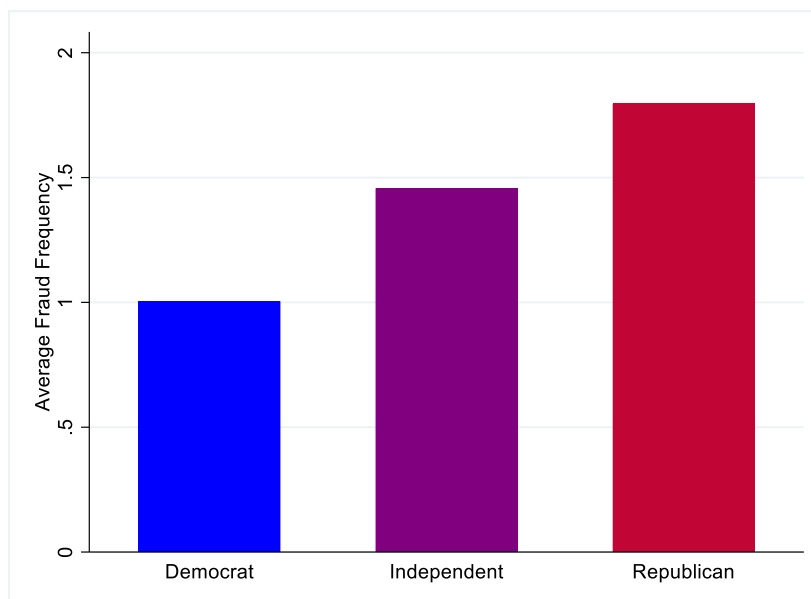
Table 4.4. Belief in How Often Illegal Election Activities may take place in NM

	All or most of the time	Some of the time	Not Much	Hardly ever	Never
Someone steals an absentee ballot, changes the ballot, and casts it	6%	22%	14%	36%	22%
Someone intimidates a voter	6%	24%	29%	28%	13%
Voting machines fail to record votes correctly	10%	18%	13%	30%	29%
Eligible voters get mistakenly removed from the voter registration file during purges/clean-up	4%	24%	21%	36%	15%
A voter casts more than one ballot, also known as double voting	8%	22%	13%	33%	25%
A non-US citizen voting	16%	20%	12%	27%	25%
Voting under a fraudulent voter registration that uses a phony name and fake address	9%	23%	14%	33%	21%
Voted absentee ballots are stolen and thrown away after being submitted	9%	24%	14%	24%	29%
Someone bribes someone or pays them money for their vote	8%	21%	17%	31%	23%
An eligible voter being denied the opportunity to vote by a poll worker or other election official	2%	12%	21%	33%	32%
Ballots are tampered with to change votes by election workers	8%	16%	11%	22%	43%
Someone pretends to be another person and casts a vote for them in-person	10%	23%	15%	33%	19%
Someone hacks into the vote tabulators and changes individual votes	10%	15%	11%	20%	44%
People submitting too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others	15%	20%	9%	31%	25%

We built an average index of fraud frequency that ranges from 1 (low fraud) to 5 (high fraud), using all 14 items to examine demographic and partisan differences.

- We find substantive differences between men's and women's perceptions of fraud. Similar to 2020, women are less likely than men to believe illegal election activities occur more frequently.
- We also find significant differences between partisans (see Figure 4.5). Democrats are far less likely (average index of 1, low fraud) to believe that fraud frequently happens, than Republicans (1.80) and Independents (1.46).
- Also like 2020, we find that those with a college education (1.25) are less likely to believe fraud frequently happens than those with no college (1.41). This suggests that knowledge and information are essential to sifting through fraudulent claims about voting. Education materials focusing on describing and explaining election security could help to reduce beliefs about fraud.
- In 2020, we found that younger voters and older voters have the lowest estimates for the frequency of fraud and middle-aged voters the highest. In 2022, older voters continued to have lower estimates of fraud (1.18), with younger voters' more like middle-aged voters (1.42).
- Like 2020, we found that African Americans had the lowest fraud estimates. Hispanics had the highest estimates of fraud.

Figure 4.5. Average Fraud Frequency by Party



Attitudes Toward Voter Identification

Voter authentication and identification are essential to election administration because only qualified electors can vote. The 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA) established a minimum

threshold for voter identification in federal elections, which requires voters who are voting for the first time and did not provide verification of their identity when they registered to show some identification. This could be a current and valid photo identification or a non-photo ID such as a utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or any government document with the voter's name and address.

Thirty-six states have laws requiring voter identification at the polls for in-person voters. The remaining 14 states and DC use other methods to identify voters. NM, for example, has no document requirement except for first-time voters under HAVA. NM in-person voters are authenticated by verbally stating their name, address, and birth year. But voters could choose to present a photo ID. It is theoretically the voter's choice.

We asked respondents a number of questions related to voter ID requirements because of the complexity surrounding the issues and how it can be framed.

- First, we asked respondents, “Do you support or oppose requiring all people to show a photo ID when they vote?” 71% of voters support voter ID requirements, a decrease from 77% in 2020. Only 20% of voters oppose voter ID laws, while 9% responded, "Don't know."
- We find, not too surprisingly, significant partisan differences in support for voter ID laws. Only 47% of Democrats support voter ID laws, a major decrease from 61% in 2020. 99% of Republicans support voter ID laws, a slight increase from 96% in 2020.
- Independents were more split but leaned closer to Republicans, with 80% supporting voter ID laws. This is a slight increase from 78% in 2020.

To assess attitudes toward the trade-off between vote fraud and greater access, we repeated a question that we have asked respondents since 2006, asking “Thinking about elections and election reforms, which is more important to you, ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote or protecting the voting system against fraud?” Table 4.5 tracks changes over time.

- In 2022, the difference between ensuring the right to vote and protecting the system against fraud was relatively small compared to recent years, only 4 points. 2008 was the last time these numbers were similarly close, although the question was worded slightly differently due to respondents volunteering “equally important” as a response.
- Nevertheless, a slight majority (52%) favor access over system protection (48%). However, that gap has declined substantially since its high in the 2012 election when it was 62% that favored access over 34% that favored protecting the system against fraud.

Table 4.5. Voter Attitudes toward Voter Identification over time?

2022 Which is more important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		52
Protecting the voting system against fraud		48
2020 Which is more important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		51
Protecting the voting system against fraud		46
Don't know		3
2018 Which is more important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		58
Protecting the voting system against fraud		39
Don't know		3
2016 Which is more important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		58
Protecting the voting system against fraud		39
Don't know		3
2014 Which is more important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		58
Protecting the voting system against fraud		38
Don't know		4
2012 Which is more important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		62
Protecting the voting system against fraud		34
Don't know		4
2010 Which is More important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		44
Protecting the voting system against fraud		53
Don't Know		3
2008 Which is More important?		
Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote		42
Protecting the voting system against fraud		39
Both are equally important/neither		16
Don't Know		3

A great deal of the variance in attitudes towards election reforms can be explained via partisanship.

- Nearly nine in ten Democrats (86%), compared to one in ten Republicans (10%), believe ensuring everyone eligible has the right to vote is more important. These trends are consistent with previous reports and suggest that Democrats have increased support over time while Republicans have decreased support suggesting overtime increases in party polarization around voting.

- Republicans express similar support in the opposite direction; nine in ten Republicans (90%), compared to 14% of Democrats, believe that protecting the system against fraud is more important than expanding the franchise.
- Independents are far more split, with 42% favoring access and 58% favoring protection.
- Like 2020, gender continues to influence responses, with 56% of women favoring access, compared to only 46% of men. Women are generally more Democratic, so this finding is also related to partisanship.
- White voters favor access slightly (54%), at about the same percentage, 53%, as in 2020.
- Hispanic voters report a decrease in favoring access (47%) compared to 51% in 2020.
- Consistent with previous reports, more educated voters had greater support for ensuring everyone eligible has the right to vote. 61% of college-educated voters favor access, compared to only 46% without college degrees.

To assess voters' feelings about the current NM Voter ID law, we asked a more specific question that provided additional context about NM voter ID laws as shown in Table 4.6. We asked: "New Mexico's in-person voter ID law requires voters to state their address, name, and birth year. Do you think this requirement is: too strict, just right, or not strict enough?"

- Our findings indicate 56% of voters believe the current law is *just right*, while 43% believe it is *not strict enough*. 2% of voters said the ID law was *too strict*. These numbers are almost identical to 2020.
- Not surprisingly, there is a partisan divide related to attitudes toward NM's Voter ID law. Where 81% of Democrats believe the Voter ID law is *just right*, only 25% of Republicans feel the same. Likewise, where 75% of Republicans believe the law is *not strict enough*, only 16% of Democrats feel the same. 41% of Independents believe the law is *just right*, while 59% believe it is *not strict enough*.

Table 4.6. Voter Attitudes Toward NM Voter ID Law by Partisanship

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	All
2022				
Not Strict enough	16%	59%	75%	51%
Just Right	81%	41%	25%	48%
Too strict	3%	0%	0%	1%
2020				
Not Strict enough	14%	46%	77%	42%
Just Right	81%	52%	22%	55%
Too strict	5%	2%	1%	3%
2018				
Not strict enough	19%	57%	82%	46%
Just right	76%	41%	16%	50%
Too strict	5%	3%	2%	4%
2016				
Not strict enough	21%	56%	86%	48%
Just right	77%	43%	14%	51%
Too strict	2%	1%	0%	1%
2014				
Not strict enough	29%	61%	86%	54%
Just right	69%	39%	14%	45%
Too strict	2%	0	0%	1%
2012				
Not strict enough	31%	50%	87%	50%
Just right	69%	50%	13%	50%
Too strict	0%	0%	0%	0%
2010				
Not Strict Enough	39%	72%	83%	61%
Just right	60%	28%	17%	39%
Too Strict	1%	0%	0%	0%

Attitudes Toward Election Reforms

Election reforms have been an expanding area of public policy over the last two decades. For example, over this period, NM has implemented numerous reforms. In 2006, several problems were identified in the DRE machines that were used in the 2002 and 2004 elections. In 2005, NM election activists filed a lawsuit to end using electronic voting machines that do not provide for a voter-verifiable and auditable paper trail.⁴⁰ In 2005, NM mandated that voting systems include a paper trail. In 2006, during the legislative session, NM legislators passed a bill to move to a statewide optical scan paper ballot system in time for the federal 2006 general election. NM was the first state that moved from a predominantly electronic voting system to one that mandated optical scan paper ballots statewide, intending to provide a paper trail so that elections could be audited for accuracy and to provide an environment that would promote greater voter confidence.⁴³ In 2010, NM moved from a precinct-based voting system to one that allowed for

voting convenience centers (VCCs), allowing voters to vote at any VCC in their county. In 2019, several election reform bills passed the legislature and were signed by Governor Lujan Grisham. These included Senate Bill 672 which allows same day registration so eligible voters can register through Election Day and automated registration.²⁶

Using the Last 4 Digits of Voters' Social Security Numbers for Authentication on VBM Ballots

Vote-by-mail (VBM) increased dramatically nationwide during the COVID-19 pandemic, including in NM. NM expanded VBM from about 10% of the electorate in the last several elections to 36% of all 2020 voters. In response to the pandemic, the NM legislature made several changes to the law during a special legislative session.⁴⁴ One such change was having VBM voters include the last four digits of their social security numbers on the inner envelope as an election integrity measure. Before this, NM had very minimal security and only required that voters sign the affidavit stating they were a qualified elector. NM has never done signature matching. For the 2022 election, NM returned to its signature affidavit as the requirement for a VBM voter. In 2023 the NM legislature decided to return to the last 4 digits of a voter's social security number, in addition to their signed affidavit. We inquired whether voters thought this law was too strict, just right, or not strict enough.

- 62% of voters believe the requirement is just right, while 36% believe it is not strict enough. Only 2% believe it is too strict.
- There were significant partisan differences in response to this question. 88% of Democrats and 49% of Independents felt this law was just right, compared to only 27% of Republicans. 72% of Republicans felt the law was not strict enough, compared to only 7% of Democrats and 50% of Independents. This is consistent with previous sections of this report that suggest Republicans are more concerned with protecting election integrity.
- We do not find any substantive relationship between race and attitudes toward keeping the last four-digit rule.
- By gender, women are more likely to believe the requirement is just right (68%) than men (55%); 43% of men but only 30% of women believe it is not strict enough.
- Voters with a college education are more likely to believe the requirement is just right (68%) than those without a college education (58%).
- Middle aged voters (41-64) are most likely to believe the requirement is not strict enough (43%). Younger (18-40) voters and older (65+) voters are similarly likely to believe the requirement is just right (67%), while middle aged voters (41-64) are less likely to believe it is just right (55%).

All Mail Elections

²⁶ <https://nmpoliticalreport.com/quick-reads/how-bills-related-to-elections-and-voting-fared-in-the-2019-legislative-session/>

We also asked voters their feelings towards moving to a universal all-mail election system, like the states of Oregon and Colorado. These states automatically send ballots to every registered voter for every election in which the voter is qualified. We asked voters to strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following “New Mexico should move to permanent all-mail elections.” The frequency and party results are visible in Table 4.7.

- There is very little support for moving to all-mail elections. Overall, 81% of voters disagree with moving to all-mail elections, an increase from 72% in 2020. Of these, 59% strongly oppose it, and 22% somewhat oppose it.
- Only 5% of voters strongly agreed that we should move to all-mail elections, a decrease from 9% in 2020. Another 14% somewhat agreed, a reduction from 19% in 2020.
- We find a sizeable partisan disparity between partisan groups. 96% of Republicans disagree, while 87% of DTS and 68% of Democrats also disagree. Nevertheless, the majority of every partisan group would prefer not to move to all-mail voting.
- We did not find any substantive differences in levels of agreement between gender and race/ethnicity. Middle aged (64%) and older (59%) and voters were more strongly opposed than younger voters (50%), and those with no college degree (64%) compared to those with a college degree (52%) were more strongly opposed to all mail-in voting.

Table 4.7. Overall and Party Support and Opposition to "NM Should Move to All Mail Elections"

	Democrats	Independents	Republicans	Overall
Strongly disagree	34%	72%	87%	59%
Somewhat disagree	34%	15%	9%	22%
Somewhat agree	24%	10%	3%	14%
Strongly agree	8%	3%	1%	5%

- Voters who voted by mail are much more supportive of moving to all mail elections than voters who voted in person, as shown in Table 4.8. Similar to 2020, most in-person early (83%) and Election Day (89%) voters disagreed with moving to all-mail elections. Also similar to 2020, a slight majority (53%) of VBM voters disagreed.
- Experiencing the VBM process increases support for this election change, but even for those voters, there is not a huge swell of support for all mail elections.

Table 4.8. Vote Mode and Support and Opposition to “NM Should Move to All Mail Elections”

	VBM	Early	Election Day
Strongly oppose	29%	60%	69%
Somewhat oppose	24%	23%	20%
Somewhat agree	33%	13%	9%
Strongly agree	14%	4%	2%

- From 2010 to 2020, there was an increase in support for all-mail elections. In 2010 moving to all mail elections was supported by 17% of voters; in 2016, it was 20%; in 2018, it was 19%; and in 2020, it was 28%. Therefore, the move back to 19% in 2022 represents a clear shift against all-mail elections. As the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic decreased, so did the potential need (and support) for all-mail elections.

As claims of machine tampering and skepticism over machine counts have emerged, we asked voters their preference for machine versus hand counts of ballots. A majority of voters (77%) prefer using voting machines to count ballots, with 47% strongly preferring machine counts. But there is a clear partisan difference. As reported in Table 4.9, only 33% of Republicans and 36% of Independents strongly prefer machine counts, compared to 58% of Democrats. Over a third of Republicans (36%) prefer hand counted ballots, 23% strongly, compared to only 7% of Democrats, 1% strongly.

Table 4.9. “Would you prefer ballots in your county to be counted by voting machines or by people by hand?”, by Party

	Republican	Independents	Democrat
Prefer machine counts a lot	33%	36%	58%
Prefer machine counts somewhat	31%	30%	35%
Prefer hand counts somewhat	13%	15%	6%
Prefer hand counts to machine count a lot	23%	19%	1%

A vast majority of voters support post-election audits; 57% strongly and 33% somewhat agree that every state should have a post-election audit. While overall support runs across party, Republicans feel more strongly, with 77% of voters strongly agreeing that every state should have a post-election audit, compared to 62% of Independents and 40% of Democrats. Of course, NM runs and reports a postelection audit to ensure that the tabulators accurately counts the ballots and returns legitimate winners.

Table 4.10. How much do you agree or disagree that every state should have a post-election auditing process to ensure that votes were counted correctly?

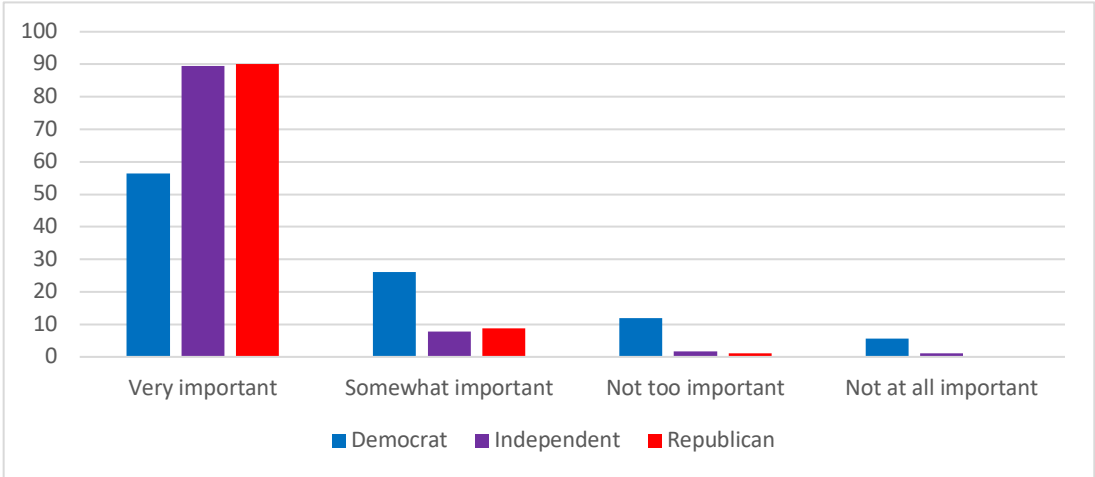
	Republican	Independents	Democrat
Strongly agree	77%	62%	40%
Somewhat agree	19%	31%	51%
Somewhat disagree	3%	4%	6%
Strongly disagree	1%	3%	3%

Attitudes Toward Election Administration and Election Reforms

On election administration, we asked voters how important it is to ensure accurate voter registration rolls, even if some eligible voters are removed and required to re-register for participation in future elections. A large majority of voters believe it is very (72%) or somewhat

(18%) important to ensure the accuracy of voter registration rolls. In Figure 4.6, by party, 89% of Independents and 90% of Republicans indicate that this is very important, compared to 56% of Democrats. Only 1% of Independents and no Republicans thought that this was not at all important, compared to 6% of Democrats.

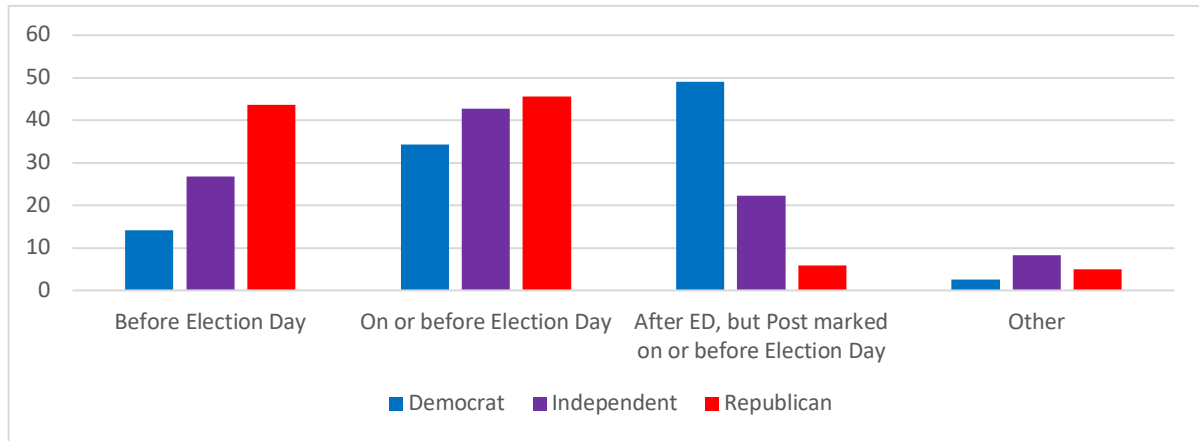
Figure 4.6. Attitude Toward Accuracy of Voter Registration Rolls, by Party



We asked voters when mail ballots should have to arrive at the local election office to be counted.

- Most voters (66%) agree that mail ballots should have to arrive at the local election office on (39%) or before (27%) Election Day. 31% support counting the ballots that arrive after Election Day if it is postmarked on or before Election Day.
- In Figure 4.7 we see that Republicans were much more likely to say that ballots should arrive before (44%) or on (46%) than Democrats (14% and 34% respectively). 49% of Democrats support allowing ballots to arrive after Election Day with a postmark on or before Election Day, compared to only 5% of Republicans and 22% of Independents supporting this.
- Hispanics feel most strongly that ballots should arrive on or before Election Day.
- While there is no gender difference, those with at least a college education are more likely to support ballots arriving with a postmark on or before Election Day (38%) than those with no college (24%).

Figure 4.7. Attitude Toward Arrival of VBM Ballots, by Party

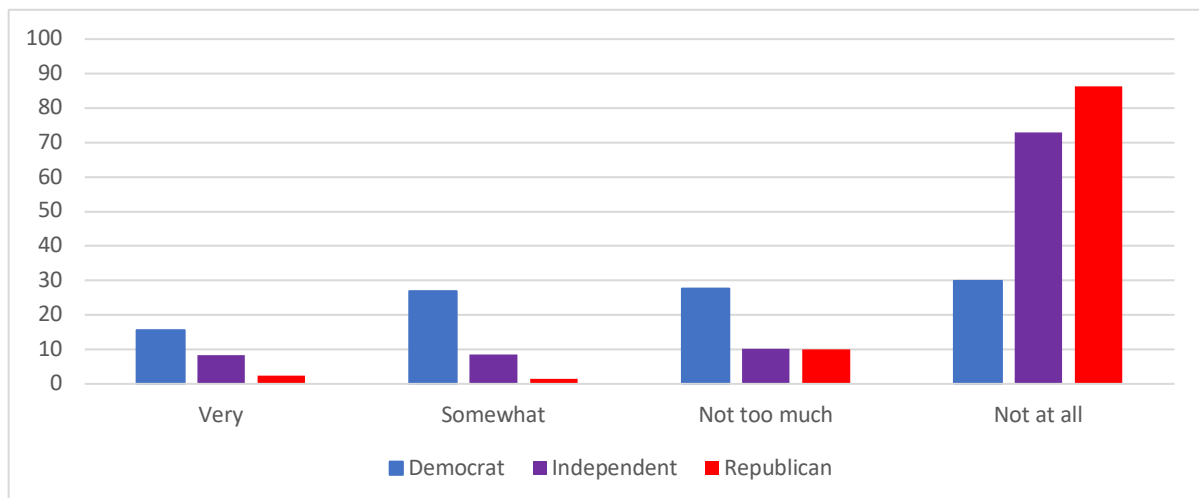


On the issue of legally requiring citizens to vote in elections or face fines, a majority of voters do not support compulsory voting in the US.

- While 26% say it is a very good (9%) or good (17%) idea, 42% say it is a bad idea and 32% a very bad idea, with Democrats (31%) slightly more supportive than Independents (17%) or Republicans (20%).
- While there is little difference by race or education, males (30%) were more supportive of the idea than females (20%), and young voters (45%) more supportive than middle aged (18%) or older (20%) voters.

On the issue of voting age, a majority (77%) of voters do not support extending voting rights to 16 and 17-year-olds, with Republicans as seen in Figure 4.8 much more strongly opposed (86%) than Independents (73%) or Democrats (30%), and Democrats most supportive.

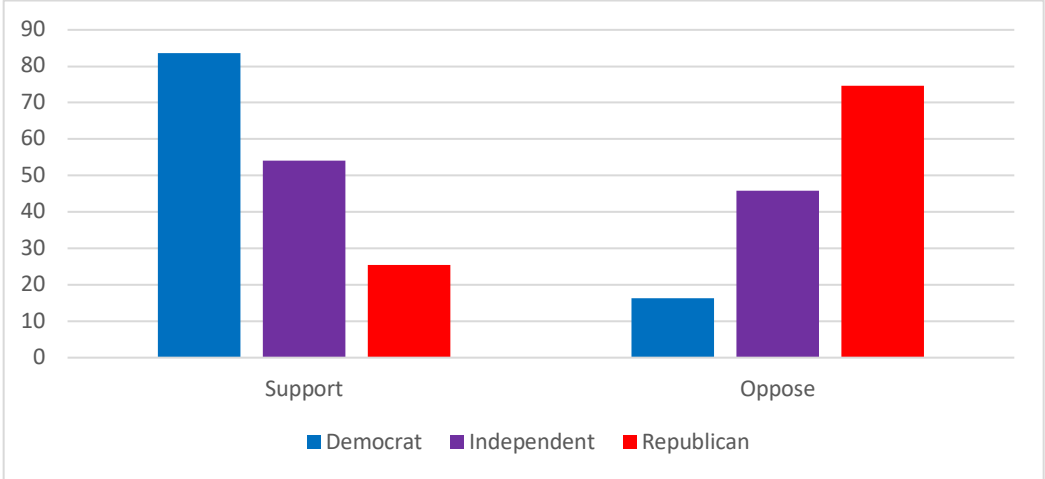
Figure 4.8. Attitudes Towards Extending Voting Rights to 16 & 17 Year-olds, by Party



Same day registration was introduced in the 2020 election in NM. Overall, voters support (57%) allowing New Mexicans to register on Election Day, which will be the law in 2024.

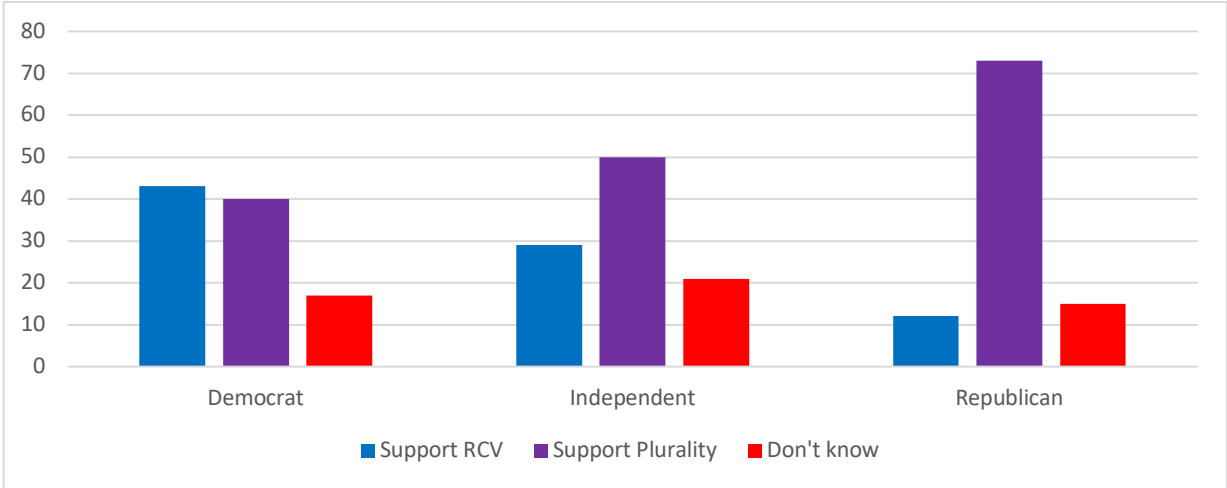
- As shown in Figure 4.9 voters differ by partisanship with Democrats (84%) much more supportive than Independents (54%) or Republicans (25%).

Figure 4.9. Attitude Toward Election Day Registration, by Party



Finally, we asked about voter support for ranked choice voting. Ranked choice voting is used by two cities in New Mexico: Santa Fe and Las Cruces. We find that a majority (54%) of voters prefer the current system where voters select a single candidate as opposed to ranking candidates, which has support from 26% of voters. One in five voters (20%) indicate they don't know. These results, however, differ a great deal by party as shown in Figure 4.10. A plurality (43%) of Democrats support RCV, while 29% support the plurality election we currently use. Half (50%) of Independents oppose RCV along with a large majority (73%) of Republicans.

Figure 4.10. Support for RCV or Plurality Elections by Party



Appendix A. 2022 Election Administration, Security and Reform Survey Frequency Report

Introduction

Q1. How did you vote in this fall's general election? (n=2,514)

Absentee/Vote-by-mail including dropping off a ballot that was mailed to you	14%
Early in-person at a vote center	50%
Election Day in-person at a vote center or precinct	36%

Q2. How confident are you that **YOUR** vote in this year's General Election was counted as you intended? (n=2,513)

Very confident	65%
Somewhat confident	20%
Not too confident	8%
Not at all confident	7%

Q3. Think about vote counting throughout your county and not just your own personal situation. How confident are you that votes in your county or city were counted as voters intended in the 2022 general election?

	Very Confident	Somewhat confident	Not too confident	Not at all confident
Your County (n=2,514)	57%	25%	10%	8%
The State of New Mexico (n=2,513)	50%	25%	14%	11%
Nationwide (n=2,512)	40%	24%	19%	17%

Q4. Thinking in political terms, would you say that you are (n=2,509)

Very liberal	15%
Somewhat liberal	18%
Moderate	23%
Somewhat conservative	23%
Very conservative	15%
Haven't thought much about it	4%
Don't know	2%

Mail Voting

Q5. Why did you request a vote-by-mail ballot? Please mark all that apply. (n=536)

Voting by mail or absentee was just more convenient for me	69%
I have a physical disability that makes it difficult for me to go to the polls	18%
I was worried about COVID-19	18%
I was going to be out of town for this election	11%
I could not get to the poll on Election Day because of my work or school schedule	11%
I am in the armed forces / a domestic out of state voter	4%
I was an election official or poll	1%
Religious observances would have interfered with my going to the polls	0%
Others	9%

Q6. Have you voted by mail in a previous election or is this your first time? (n=535)

Yes, I have voted by mail in a previous election	91%
No, this is my first time voting by mail	9%

Q7. When did you request an absentee ballot? (n=527)

Before August 23 (Before the state primary election)	19%
August 23 to September 30	30%
October 1 through 15	41%
October 16-29	10%

Q8. Did you track your mail ballot either online or through text/email messages? (n=535)

Yes	33%
No	67%

Q9. Which of the following describes reason you chose to track your ballot? Please mark all that apply (n=192)

I believed the 2022 election was too important to risk my ballot being rejected	55%
I was concerned my ballot would be lost in the mail	38%
I was automatically signed up for ballot tracking	17%
I was concerned my ballot would be rejected	7%
Other, please describe why you chose to track your ballot	21%

Q10. Which of the following describes reason you chose NOT to track your ballot? Please mark all that apply (n=345)

I fully trusted my ballot would be received and counted by the election	55%
I was not aware that I could track my ballot	37%
I was worried my contact information would be used for non-election purposes	5%
I did not feel comfortable tracking my ballot information online or through text messages	1%
I did not care if my ballot was rejected or did not arrive on time	1%
Other, please describe why you chose NOT to track your ballot	14%

Q11. Did you fill out your ballot with anyone else, such as a family member or friend, or did you complete your ballot alone? (n=534)

Alone	95%
With someone else	5%

Q12. With whom did you complete your ballot? Please mark all that apply. (n=51)

Spouse or partner	80%
Parent or parents	5%
Child or children	2%
Roommate	0%
Friend	0%
Other family member	0%
Party or campaign worker	0%
Nursing home or medical aid	2%
Other (please specify)	1%

Q13. When did you return your mail ballot? (n=535)

After Election Day	0%
On Election Day	6%
1-7 days before Election Day	25%
8-14 days before Election Day	33%
15-30 days before Election Day	24%
More than 30 days before Election Day	8%
Don't know	4%

Q14. Who returned your ballot or dropped it in the mail? (n=534)

I did	87%
A member of my immediate family did	11%
My roommate did	0%
A friend of mine did	0%
A political party or interest group member did	0%
A stranger did	0%
Other (please specify)	2%

Q15. How did you return your ballot? (n=462)

At a post office box at a U.S. Postal Service location	30%
At an official post office box not at a U.S. Postal Service location	10%
It was picked up by the postal worker who delivers mail to my home	28%
A drop box used only for ballots	5%
I dropped it off at the Early Voting Center office during early voting	9%
I dropped it off at the County Clerk's office	7%
I dropped it off on Election Day at a vote center or the election supervisor's office	5%
I emailed my ballot	4%
Other (please specify)	2%

Q16. Why did you decide to drop off your ballot rather than mail the ballot back in?

Please mark all that apply. (n=193)

It was very convenient to drop it off	23%
I didn't trust the USPS to deliver it on time	13%
I didn't have enough time to use the USPS for return delivery	19%
I wanted to be certain that it arrived	28%
Other (please specify)	1%

Q17. How difficult or easy was it to find the place where you dropped off your ballot?

(n=119)

Very difficult	1%
Somewhat difficult	4%
Fairly easy	11%
Very easy	84%

Q18. When you returned your ballot to a drop box, did you directly observe any of the following events taking place near it? Mark all that apply. (n=193)

People peacefully holding signs or giving out literature in support of a candidate or ballot question	4%
Individuals or groups of people casting doubt on whether the election was fraudulent	0%
Individuals or groups of people seeming to challenge whether some people were properly dropping off ballots	0%
Individuals or groups, other than police officers, carrying a gun	0%
Someone taking pictures of voters or election workers who DID NOT seem to be a reporter	0%
Anything else that seemed disruptive	1%
I didn't observe any of these things	55%

Q19. Did you return anyone else's ballot? (n=462)

No	87%
Yes	13%

Q20. Whose ballot(s) did you return? Please mark all that apply. (n=145)

Spouse or partner	29%
Parent or parents	11%
Child or children	1%
Roommate	0%
Friend	0%
Other family member	7%
Other (please specify)	0%

Q21. How many ballots did you return? (n=67)

1	24%
2	68%
3	7%
4	1%
5	0%
6	0%

Q22. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your mail ballot:

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
My ballot was too long (n =530)	2%	21%	35%	42%
My ballot choices were kept private at home (n=526)	74%	12%	6%	8%
My ballot privacy was maintained when my vote was counted (n=524)	69%	22%	5%	4%

Q23. Were you contacted by your local election official because there was a problem with your ballot and it could not be counted? (n=535)

No	99%
Yes	1%

Q24. Were you able to resolve the problem? (n=3)

No	0%
Yes	100%

Q25. Overall, how difficult was it to follow all the instructions necessary to cast your ballot and return it to be counted? (n=535)

Very easy	75%
Somewhat easy	22%
Somewhat hard	3%
Very hard	0%

In-Person Voting

Q26. When you voted, did you directly observe any of the following events taking place at your polling place or vote center? (Mark all that apply) (n=1,980)

People peacefully holding signs or giving out literature in support of a candidate or ballot question	7%
Individuals or groups of people casting doubt on whether the election was fraudulent	3%
Individuals or groups of people seeming to challenge whether some people were properly dropping off ballots	1%
Individuals or groups, other than police officers, carrying a gun	1%
Someone taking pictures of voters or election workers who DID NOT seem to be a reporter	2%
Anything else that seemed disruptive	5%
I didn't observe any of these things	85%

Q27. How long was the check-in line when you got to your vote center or polling location? (n=1,976)

Very Long	2%
Somewhat long	7%
Not very long	21%
Not long at all	70%

Q28. About how many minutes did you wait in line in this election before you were able to vote? (n=1,927)

Minutes	Early
0 Minutes	19%
1-5 Minutes	57%
6-10 Minutes	11%
11-15 Minutes	4%
16-20 Minutes	4%
21-40 Minutes	3%
41-120 Minutes	2%
Average	6.5 min

Q29. Did you consider the overall wait time at the vote center or polling location to be:
(n=1,977)

No wait time	59%
Short wait time	29%
Moderate wait time	10%
Long wait time	2%

Q30. In New Mexico the voter gets to choose how they want to be identified at the polls. They can provide (1) their name, address, and birth year, (2) a photo ID, or (3) a non-photo ID. What type of identification did you provide? (n=1,977)

Name, address, and birth year	52%
A photo id (e.g. driver's license, military ID, passport, Sam's Club)	30%
Voter Registration Card	13%
I used a QR code that was sent to me by the county	1%
I showed some other form of identification (Please indicate what you showed)	3%
I don't remember	1%

Q31. Thinking back, did the poll worker ask for a photo or non-photo ID or did you just provide it without being asked? (n=565)

Poll Worker asked for the ID	29%
I just provided it	63%
I don't remember	8%

Q32. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the voting location where you voted:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The location was easy to find. (n=1,976)	77%	20%	2%	1%
I had to go far out of my way to vote (n=1,949)	2%	5%	29%	64%
It was hard to find a place to park. (n=1,948)	2%	5%	35%	58%
The poll workers were helpful. (n=1,955)	64%	32%	3%	1%
My ballot privacy was protected. (n=1,955)	62%	32%	4%	2%
The ballot was too long. (n=1,954)	4%	17%	57%	22%

Q33. Please answer the following questions on ballot privacy: (n=1,975)

	Yes	No
Did someone in line at the polling place ask you who you were voting for?	1%	99%
Did a poll worker look at your voted ballot?	7%	93%
Did you keep your ballot in a privacy sleeve while you were moving around the vote center/precinct?	24%	76%

Voting Experience/ Non-Voting Experience

Q34. How many contests did you vote on your 2022 ballot? (n =2,504)

All contests	69%
Nearly all contests	19%
Most contests	6%
About 1/2 of all contests	2%
Just a few contests	2%
No contests	2%

Q35. Did anyone help you fill out your ballot? (n=1,975)

No	98%
Yes	2%

Q36. Who helped you fill out your ballot? (n=15)

Spouse or partner	5%
Parent or parents	0%
Child or children	8%
Roommate	0%
Friend	0%
Other family member	12%
Poll worker	13%
Employer	0%
Co-worker	0%
Someone else (please specify)	62%

Q37. How would you rate your voting experience overall? (n=2,512)

Excellent	62%
Good	30%
Fair	7%
Poor	1%

Q38. Party Identification (n=2,496)

Strong Democrat	30%
Weak Democrat	11%
Leaning Democrat	9%
Independent	9%
Leaning Republican	10%
Weak Republican	8%
Strong Republican	23%

Q39. Below is a list of possible illegal election activities that may or may not take place in your New Mexico. How often do you think each event occurs in your state?

	All or most of the time	Some of the time	Not Much	Hardly ever	Never
Someone steals an absentee ballot, changes the ballot, and casts it (n=1,229, Ballot A)	6%	22%	14%	36%	22%
Someone intimidates a voter (n=1,229, Ballot A)	6%	24%	29%	28%	13%
Voting machines fail to record votes correctly (n=2,496 Ballot A and B)	10%	18%	13%	30%	29%
Eligible voters get mistakenly removed from the voter registration file during purges/clean-up (n=1,220 Ballot A)	4%	24%	21%	36%	15%
A voter casts more than one ballot, also known as double voting (n=1,223 Ballot A)	8%	22%	13%	33%	25%
A non-US citizen votes (n=1,221 Ballot A)	16%	20%	12%	27%	25%
Voting under a fraudulent voter registration that uses a phony name and fake address (n=1,227 Ballot A)	9%	23%	14%	33%	21%
Voted absentee ballots are stolen and thrown away after being submitted (n=1,269, Ballot B)	9%	24%	14%	24%	29%
Someone bribes someone or pays them money for their vote (n= 2,495, Ballot A and B)	8%	21%	17%	31%	23%
An eligible voter being denied the opportunity to vote by a poll worker or other election official (n=1,265, Ballot B)	2%	12%	21%	33%	32%
Ballots are tampered with to change votes by election workers (n=1,267, Ballot B)	8%	16%	11%	22%	43%
Someone pretends to be another person and casts a vote for them in-person (n=1,261, Ballot B)	10%	23%	15%	33%	19%

Someone hacks into the vote tabulators and changes individual votes (n=1,266, Ballot B)	10%	15%	11%	20%	44%
People submitting too many ballots in drop boxes on behalf of others (n=1,259, Ballot B)	15%	20%	9%	31%	25%

Q40. How often do you think **elected officials** make rules that favor one party or another? (n=1,235)

All or almost all of the time	31%
Most of the time	29%
Sometimes	30%
Rarely	5%
Never or almost never	5%

Q41. Thinking about election administration, how important or not is it to ensure accurate voter registration rolls, even if some eligible voters are removed and required to re-register for participation in future elections (n=1,235)

Very important	72%
Somewhat important	18%
Not too important	7%
Not at all important	3%

Q42. When should a mail ballot have to arrive at the local election office to be counted? (n=1,236)

Before Election Day	27%
On Election Day or before	39%
After Election Day with a postmark indicating it had been sent on Election Day or before	30%
Other	4%

Q43. Some countries legally require citizens to vote in elections or face fines. Do you think compulsory voting in the United States would be: (n=1,232)

A very good idea	9%
A good idea	17%
A bad idea	42%
A very bad idea	32%

Q44. During the past year did you: (Mark all that apply) (n=1,236)

Attend local political meetings	14%
Put up a political sign	16%
Work for a candidate or campaign	5%
Attend a political protest, march, or demonstration	7%
Contact a public official	28%
Donate money to a candidate, campaign, or political organization	29%
Donate blood	15%
None of these	41%

Q45. Please indicate to which of the following groups or people you donated money. Mark all that apply (n=454)

Candidate for President	22%
Candidate for U.S. Senate in my state	16%
Candidate for U.S. Senate in another state	24%
Candidate for U.S. House in my state	30%
Candidate for U.S. House in another state	18%
Candidate for state office	39%
Political party committee	24%
Political action committee at work	10%
Political group	34%
Other (please specify)	19%

Q46. During the past year how much did you donate to candidates, campaigns, and political organizations? (n=448)

\$100 or less	48%
Between \$100 and \$499	35%
Between \$500 and \$999	10%
Between \$1,000 and \$4,999	6%
Between \$5,000 and \$9,999	1 %
\$10,000 or more	0%

Q47. During the past year how often did you donate to candidates, campaigns, and political organizations? (n=447)

Once	28%
Two to five times	55%
Many times, but less often than every month	11%
Monthly or more often	6%

Q48. Compared to a year ago how are each of the following doing economically?

	Much better	Somewhat better	About the same	Somewhat worse	Much worse
You and your family (n=1,234)	5%	13%	39%	26%	17%
Your State economy (n=1,218)	6%	15%	26%	25%	28%
National economy (n=1,216)	2%	14%	14%	31%	39%

Q49. What issue mattered most to you in this election? (n=1,236)

Inflation/the economy	22%
Abortion	15%
Immigration	7%
Threats to democracy	30%
Education	3%
Crime	11%
Climate Change	4%
Other (please specify)	8%

Q50. How much do the following people care about whether you vote?

	A lot	A little	Hardly at all	Not at all	Not Applicable
Your family (n=1,275)	53%	22%	9%	11%	5%
Your coworkers (n=1,262)	16%	20%	13%	16%	35%
Members of your union (n=1,262)	9%	5%	2%	5%	79%
Your employer (n=1,259)	11%	12%	8%	18%	51%
Members of your church (n=1,261)	16%	12%	5%	11%	56%
Your friends (n=1,269)	32%	31%	12%	15%	10%
You (n=1,270)	93%	4%	2%	1%	0%

Q51. After you vote, do you typically wear your "I voted" sticker or display it so others can see you voted? (n=1,279)

I wear my sticker	41%
I place my sticker on an object (cell phone, water bottle, laptop, etc)	22%
I don't display my sticker.	19%
I don't take the sticker.	7%
I didn't get a sticker	11%

Q52. Do you typically post, update your status, or do a check-in on social media to show that you voted? (n=1,277)

Yes	17%
No	50%
No, I don't use social media	33%

Q53. How often does anyone ask you which candidate you prefer?

	All or Almost all of the time	Most of the time	Some-times	Rarely	Never or Almost never
How often does anyone, including friends or family, ask you which candidate you prefer or voted for? (n=1,278)	7%	10%	33%	29%	21%

If a friend or family member asks you who you prefer in an election, how often do you name a candidate? (n=1,279)	48%	23%	15%	6%	8%
If you tell a close friend or family member which candidate you prefer, how often do you tell the truth? (n=1,275)	86%	9%	2%	2%	1%

Q54. According to the law, which candidate you vote for is supposed to be kept secret unless you tell someone. Even so, how easy or hard do you think it would be for politicians, union officials, or the people you work for to find out who you voted for, even if you told no one? (n=1, 276)

Impossible, my vote is secret	21%
It would be very hard, but not impossible	29%
It would be somewhat hard	13%
It would be somewhat easy	13%
It would be very easy	15%
Don't Know	9%

Q55. Do you think elected officials can access voting records and figure out who a voter has voted for? (n=1, 277)

Yes	33%
No	33%
Don't know	34%

Q56. Do you think election officials can more easily identify who you voted for when you use a vote-by-mail ballot, an in-person ballot, or are they about the same? (N =314)

Vote-by-mail is easier to identify	36%
In-person is easier to identify	6%
Equally likely to be identified	58%

Q57. How much do you support extending voting rights to 16 and 17 year-olds? (n=1,279)

Very	9%
Somewhat	14%
Not too much	19%
Not at all	58%

Q58. Do you support or oppose allowing voters to register on Election Day? (n=1, 275)

Support	57%
Oppose	43%

Election Security

Q59. Did you receive a ballot in the mail that didn't belong to you or anyone in your household? (n=2,514)

Yes	6%
No	94%

Q60. Which of the following situations did you **personally observe** in the 2022 Midterm Election? Please mark all that apply (n=2,515)

	Yes	No
Someone bribes a voter or pays for votes	1%	99%
Someone being improperly denied the chance to vote	1%	99%
Someone filling out an absentee ballot for someone else	2%	98%
Voting machines failing to record votes	2%	98%
Someone using a false identity to vote	1%	99%
Voter intimidation at the polling place	1%	99%
Someone stuffing a lot of ballots into an official ballot drop	2%	98%
Other	4%	96%
None of these	89%	11%

Q61. New Mexico's in-person voter ID law requires voters to state their address, name, and birth year. Do you think this requirement is: (n=2,512)

Too strict	2%
Just right	55%
Not strict enough	43%

Q62. New Mexico's vote-by-mail law requires voters to include the last 4 of their social security number to verify their identity. Do you think this requirement is: (n=2,511)

Too strict	2%
Just right	62%
Not strict enough	36%

Q63. Would you prefer ballots in your county to be counted by voting machines or by people by hand? (n=2,504)

Prefer machine counts a lot	47%
Prefer machine counts somewhat	30%
Prefer hand counts somewhat	10%
Prefer hand counts to machine count a lot	13%

Q64. Thinking about elections and election reforms, which is more important? (n=2,499)

Ensuring that everyone who is eligible has the right to vote	52%
Protecting the voting system against	48%

Thinking about Politics

Q65. How many days a week do you typically discuss politics with family or friends?
(n=2,507)

0	15%
1	20%
2	14%
3	12%
4	9%
5	10%
6	4%
7	16%

Q66. For whom did you vote in the race for Governor? (n=2,369)

Mark Ronchetti (Republican)	46%
Michelle Lujan Grisham (Democrat)	52%
Karen Bedonie (Libertarian)	2%

Q67. For whom did you vote in the race for U.S. House? (n=2,378)

The Republican candidate	44%
The Democratic candidate	54%
A third party candidate	1%
Other (please specify)	1%

Q68. Do you support or oppose requiring all people to show a photo ID when they vote?
(n=2,508)

Support	71%
Oppose	20%
Don't know	9%

Q69. How important is it to you that there is a paper record of your vote? (n=2,505)

Very important	57%
Somewhat important	28%
Not too important	11%
Not at all important	4%

Q70. How much do you agree or disagree that every state should have a post-election auditing process to ensure that voters were counted correctly? (n=2,502)

Strongly agree	57%
Somewhat agree	33%
Somewhat disagree	7%
Strongly disagree	3%

Q71. Do you support or oppose moving all state and local elections in our state to permanent vote-by-mail elections for all voters? This would eliminate all in-person voting. (n=2,499)

Very strongly support	5%
Somewhat support	14%
Somewhat oppose	22%
Very strongly oppose	59%

Q72. Ranked choice voting or instant run-off voting is an election reform that allows voters to rank candidates from their most to least favorite and candidates are eliminated until a candidate with majority support wins the election. (n=2,500). Do you support

Ranked choice voting	26%
The current system where voters select a single candidate	54%
Don't know	20%

Q73. Please rate how you feel towards the following groups and individuals. A score of 0 means you are very cold to them, while a score of 10 means you are very warm to them, a score of 5 means that you are neither cold nor warm to them.

	0 - 3	4 to 6	7 - 10	Average
Democratic Party (n=2,489)	38%	22%	40%	4
Republican Party (n=2,478)	50%	20%	30%	3
Big Business (n=2,484)	61%	31%	8%	3
President Joe Biden (n=2,486)	48%	19%	33%	4
Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham (n=2,486)	46%	15%	39%	3
Your Election Supervisor/County Clerk (n=2,491)	21%	34%	45%	5
Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver (n=2,489)	32%	29%	39%	5
Unions (n=2,485)	38%	29%	33%	4

Q74. From what you know about global climate change or global warming, which one of the following statements comes closest to your opinion? (n=2,469)

Global climate change has been established as a serious problem, and immediate action is necessary.	46%
There is enough evidence that climate change is taking place and some action should be taken	18%
We don't know enough about global climate change, and more research is necessary before we take any action.	17%
Concern about global climate change is exaggerated. No action is necessary.	14%
Global climate change is not occurring; this is not a real issue	5%

8. Demographics

The last section is for statistical purposes only

Q75. What is your age (n=2,515)

18-30	7%
31-40	16%
41-50	11%
51- 60	21%
61-70	25%
71-80	16%
81-90	3%
91-100	1%

Q76. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (n=2,515)

Less than high school	1%
High school graduate	9%
Some college	32%
Associate's degree	20%
Bachelor's degree	19%
Master's degree	14%
PhD/MD/JD	5%

Q77. Which racial and/or ethnic groups do you consider yourself a member of? (n=2,446)

White	57%
Hispanic or Latino	25%
Black or African American	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	5%
Asian or Asian American	1%
Middle Easterner	1%
2 or more races	7%
Other	3%

Q78. How would you describe your Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin? (n=333)

Cuban	0%
Mexican	37%
Spanish	50%
Puerto Rican	3%
Central American	1%
South American	2%
Something else	7%

Q79. Do you belong to a union? (n=2,472)

Yes	9%
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No	91%
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Q80. Would you say you live in: (n=2,478)

A city	44%
A suburban area	22%
A rural area	34%

Q81. What is your gender? (n=2,466)

Male	46%
Female	53%
Other	1%

Appendix B. 2022 Election Administration, Security, and Election Reform Post Election Survey Methodology

The 2022 New Mexico Election Administration, Security and Reform Frequency Report was based on a panel of voters from 2020 and a convenience sample of a new cross section of email voters. The data for the new cross-section of voters was provided by the New Mexico Secretary of State's office after Thanksgiving. The panel survey was fielded November 11, 2022 through January 6, 2023. The fresh cross-section was in the field from December 7, 2022 through January 13, 2023. The contact rate for the overtime panel was 20%, for the fresh cross section it was 2.9%. For both samples that includes all voters we tried to contact regardless of whether their email was incorrect, bounced, or it went to their spam.

Survey questions asked about their election experience (voter confidence, voting problems, method of voting, experience with poll workers, experience with the ballot, etc.), their attitudes toward possible election reforms including fraud, voter access, voter identification, vote by mail, redistricting, ranked choice voting etc., as well as other political attitudes and behaviors including evaluations of the President, the congressional candidates and their local and state election administrators. They were also asked several questions related to statewide contests (vote choice, candidate evaluation, candidate ideology, etc.) and for a variety of demographic information.

The data from both samples were combined and weighted using a raking procedure based upon the following characteristics: age, sex, education, ethnicity, vote mode (early, absentee, Election Day), county, party registration and vote for the governor.