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## COMMON CAUSE ROLLS OUT ANNUAL POLL RESULTS IN ADVANCE OF PRIMARY

### Candidates Take Heed—Majority Say NM on Wrong Track, Want Longer Sessions, Paid Legislators

Common Cause New Mexico rolled out results from its annual poll today, with some surprises. In addition to the usual campaign finance questions, the telephone poll of 452 registered voters, randomly selected by Research and Polling Inc. for the January survey, asked voters about some other reforms and whether campaign finance would be a voting issue. The poll also asked a question bound to have implications in this year's election.

According to the results of the poll, which had a margin of error of 4.6%, **only 24% of those surveyed believed New Mexico was headed in the right direction.** A majority, 52%, believed that the state was headed off in the wrong direction. The negative attitude expressed in the poll was a marked change from the 2014 election, when 38% believed the state was headed in the right direction.

The negative feeling was accompanied positive support for various institutional changes, and a willingness to vote for campaign finance reformers. 60% of respondents said they would be more likely to vote for candidates who pushed for campaign finance reform (37% much more likely; 23% somewhat more likely).

"We're finding something different this year," said Viki Harrison, executive director of Common Cause New Mexico. "Along with our usual high levels of support for controls on contributions, lobbyists and PACs, these results are pointing to a larger appetite for change."

Harrison said that for the first time, the poll included questions about institutional changes in the legislature. "We found that 65% want to extend the length of the legislative session, which now meets for 30 days in even numbered years and 60 days in odd numbered years," she said. Results also indicated that **a majority, 54%, support paying state legislators a yearly salary equivalent to the average New Mexico household.**

New Mexico is currently the only state that does not pay its legislators a salary. Instead they are paid a daily per diem and some expenses.

"For years we've been told that the voters would never support these common-sense reforms to institutions constructed back in 1912," Harrison said. "But, maybe, the times they are changing."

### AMONG THE POLL'S OTHER TOP RESULTS:

- Nine-in-ten voters support a proposal that would require all large political contributions from individuals, corporations, political action committees (PACs), non-profits and unions to be made public (78% *strongly support* the measure).
- The vast majority of voters (91%) say it would be a good idea to require registered lobbyists to make public the bills or issues they have been hired to advocate for so that voters know who is lobbying on issues in New Mexico.
- 86% support requiring former legislators to wait at least two years after their term ends before they are able to become paid lobbyists to the New Mexico Legislature (68% *strongly support* this proposal).
- Over four-fifths (84%) of voters say they support not allowing legislators to vote on legislation that they could personally benefit from financially (76% are *strongly supportive*).
- Seven-in-ten voters also say they support the creation of an independent commission that would be responsible for redrawing the state’s legislative districts, rather than having state legislators responsible for redistricting (51% are *strongly supportive*).
- 61% believe that limiting the amount of campaign contributions helps prevent corruption
- Just over half the voters (52%) believe that public campaign financing in elections for the Public Regulation Commission, Supreme Court and Court of Appeals should be expanded to include other judicial races.
- 48% believe that ads from Political Action Committees had a large impact on the last election (26% very large; 22% large).

[You can read the full report here.](#)

*Common Cause is a nonpartisan grassroots organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. It works to create open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest; promote equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all; and to empower all people to make their voices heard as equals in the political process.*

