

SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

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Santa Fe – February 27th, 2023

Santa Fe County Clerk Katharine Clark Reflects on Legislative Priorities' Progress

[House Bill 4, Voting Rights Protections](#)

Clerk Clark emphasized the importance of HB4, stating that it not only expands voting rights but also greatly improves administrative efficiency in Clerk's offices and the Secretary of State's office. After passing the State House, the bill received the support of the Senate Rules Committee.

"We are very proud that Santa Fe has the highest turnout among large counties and the highest number of drop boxes per population. That is not a coincidence. More than 50% of our boxes are drive-up, making it extremely easy for voters to vote by mail-in ballot. Our four tribes also vote in high numbers, many by mail-in ballot, but we know that, for tribes in particular, boxes and postal mail continue to be a challenge. We want to ensure that all New Mexicans, no matter where they live, have equitable access to the ballot."

[House Bill 318, Election Board Compensation & Changes](#)

HB318, which would increase compensation for temporary Election Workers, already has bipartisan support. Clark said, "This legislation is long overdue and would grant more people the opportunity to serve their communities." She noted that low compensation is one of the most common reasons cited by poll workers for not returning to work in future elections.

[Senate Bill 43, Intimidation of Election Officials](#)

Clerk Clark is grateful for the unanimous bipartisan support from Senators to protect poll workers, election staff, Clerk's offices, and the Secretary of State's office from threats and intimidation. "Threats against election workers and administrators are threats against democracy," Clark explained, "and this legislation makes it clear that New Mexico has zero tolerance for these kinds of threats."

[Senate Bill 44, Prohibit Firearms at Polling Places](#)

"As misinformation about election security spreads, and threats to election offices become all too common," Clark opined, "poll workers are on the front lines. We often use schools as polling sites where guns are already prohibited, but for other buildings, we cannot prevent access with firearms. This bill addresses the top concern poll workers in Santa Fe County have before working at the polls. We want to ensure all polling sites are equally safe." The bill is making its way through the House, winning a "do pass" from the House Government, Elections & Indian Affairs Committee.

[Senate Bill 180, Election Changes](#)

Passage of SB180 would vastly improve election infrastructure and security across the state, according to Clark. The bill includes improvements to ballot box and voting machine maintenance, required training for poll watchers and challengers, and addressing compensation concerns.

Clark described this bill as "containing important elements that have been a clerk and Secretary of State priority bill for the last 3 sessions. The administrative changes within are important to streamlining and modernizing election administration. The bill is absolutely essential for election offices to be ready for the 2024 presidential election." The bill recently passed the Senate floor with a vote of 23-13.

[Senate Bill 286, Discriminatory Restrictive Covenants](#)

Clerk Clark is delighted with the unanimous bipartisan support of the Senate Health and Public Affairs Committee for SB286, which aims to remove discriminatory covenants from real estate documents. "In cooperation with title companies, this bill identifies continued issues with recording and mortgage practices that violate federal law. It updates our laws to ensure that problematic language on forms is not carried forward," said Clark. The Judiciary Committee will hear the bill next.

For more information, contact Mitchell Cox, the Voter Outreach Coordinator for the Clerk's office

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