

# The VOTER

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

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## President's Report by Starlyn Brown

Where do I even begin? We are being inundated every day by new executive orders, filed lawsuits, government actions, judicial rulings, tariffs, uncertain economic conditions, House passage of the SAVE Act, and on and on. It is exhausting trying to keep up with all the assaults on Democracy, Voters, the Constitution, and the laws of the United States. In an extraordinary move LWV has declared that the United States is in a Constitutional Crisis. The press release can be found [here](#). Personally, I feel like we are experiencing a masterful art of distraction, look over there, not at what I'm doing here. The good news, people like you, are paying attention! I feel we need to focus on what actions we CAN take as LWVCNM and as individuals. What are your ideas?

The 2025 NM Legislative session is in the books. Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> was the Governor's last day to sign and line-item veto bills. We owe three of our members, Jeanne Logsdon, Dick Mason, and Janie McGuigan a huge thank you for the work they did during the session. Some of the wins; SB16 – Non-Major Party Voters in Primary Elections, SB 37 - Strategic Water Reserve fund, SB 1 and SB 3a – Behavioral Health, SB267 – Housing Application Fees, SB 36 – Sensitive Personal Information Nondisclosure, and increasing Educational Salaries. To see a list of the signed bills and the date they were signed you can go to [nmlegiswatch.org/bills/signed](http://nmlegiswatch.org/bills/signed)

The Annual Meeting is very soon on May 10<sup>th</sup>. We are excited about holding the meeting at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. I hope you have had time to read through the Annual Meeting newsletter to learn what your Board has been up to in the past year, nominations for open Board positions, proposed budget revisions, and proposed bylaw changes. A pdf version of the newsletter is available on our website.

Communication – how, when, what. We currently use email, social media, the lwvcnm.org website, and the Voter newsletter as our main methods to push information to you. We are keenly aware of how diverse our membership is when it comes to what you want to know and when you want to know it. Some of our communications are on a predictable schedule every month, some are not, and some are more urgent. We are trying something new called **Hot Topics**. See page 4 for more information. If you are reading this report, thank you and I would really appreciate hearing your thoughts about our current methods. It is important to include our members to the extent that they want to be included and informed. Please do not unsubscribe from the Topics or Constant Contact email lists. If you don't want to read the email, just delete it. We always put LWVCNM in the Subject line so you know it's from us.

My email and phone are always open! Please email [president@lwvcnm.org](mailto:president@lwvcnm.org) or call the office and leave a message for me (505) 884-8441. Thank you for your LWVCNM membership and for supporting Democracy.

## ANNUAL MEETING 2025

We are looking forward to the Annual Meeting on May 10th at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. Reservations are almost at room capacity, with a few spots left. Please check [lwvcnm.org/annual-meeting-2025](http://lwvcnm.org/annual-meeting-2025) to see if reservations are still available. Watch for a 2025 Annual Meeting report in the June Voter. **Reservations close on Monday, May 5.**

Thank you and see you there!

### Inaugural Saturday Morning Coffee The Membership Committee is inviting you to an Inaugural Saturday Drop-In Coffee.



We're planning on having one per month on the third Saturday at different locations around Albuquerque.

The first one will be at the League Office, 6739 Academy Road, NE, Suite 124, Albuquerque on **May 17<sup>th</sup> from 10 -12 noon.**

Come and meet fellow League Members, catch up on League news, and find out what you can do to further democracy.

**Hope to see you there!**

RSVP to Liz Shields, 559.578.5670 (call or text)

Membership Committee - Pam, Dina, and Liz

### June LWVCNM Educational Meeting Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup> at NOON



**Topic: Affordable Housing – Beyond the Unhoused**

LWVCNM members are invited to participate in a hybrid meeting with CABQ.gov officials discussing both the current and planned Homelessness Response system and CABQ.gov funded programs to assist those currently housed or seeking affordable housing offered by CABQ.

• Health & Social Service Centers • Homebuyer Assistance • Rental and Deposit Assistance • Eviction Prevention • Legal Services • Housing Vouchers • Homeowner Rehabilitation • A Better Way Forward Employment • Landlord Support.

Please plan to join us for this hybrid event Thursday June 12<sup>th</sup> at noon MT with in-person attendance at the LWVCNM Conference Room and on Zoom.

Full program details and Zoom link to follow.

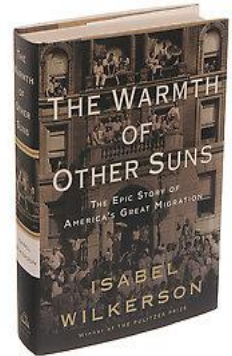
## LWVCNM Book Club

The LWVCNM Book Club meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each odd-numbered month.

**New members are always welcome!** If you are not able to complete a book before the session, no worries...join a session and complete the book at your convenience. Great conversation, light snacks, and a way to better get to know LWVCNM members.

**The group selected the following title for the May meeting:**

Date: Wednesday, May 28<sup>th</sup>  
Time: 5:30 p.m.  
Location: LWVCNM Office Conference Room, 6739 Academy Rd NE  
Title: ***The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration* by Isabel Wilkerson.**



This NYT bestseller was written by Pulitzer Prize winning author Isabel Wilkerson. According to *Goodreads.com*, this book presents "...a definitive and dramatic account of one of the great untold stories of American history: the Great Migration of six million Black citizens who fled the South for the North and West in search of a better life, from WWI to 1970."

Contact Janet at 505-401-2052 for questions.

## SAVE-THE-DATE

**SPRING INTO SUMMER** *with a* LWVCNM HAPPY HOUR

**When:** Tuesday, June 3, 2025 • 4 PM—7 PM

**Where:** Steel Bender Brewery, 8305 2<sup>nd</sup> St NW, Los Ranchos de Albuquerque



Join your League friends at this industrial-chic taproom featuring beer, wine, cider and a full menu of pub grub. We all need to take a deep breath, kick back, and relax together.

**Just drop in. No RSVP needed.** Check out Steel Bender at [steelbenderbrewyard.com](http://steelbenderbrewyard.com)

## Communication

### Trying Something New – **HOT TOPICS**



In response to members who feel like they're not receiving enough information, but do not want to be inundated with numerous email messages,

LWVCNM recently introduced a weekly **Hot Topics email** and a **Hot Topics web page!**

Hot Topics includes announcements with links that would otherwise be individual emails. Our members want information, and we want to make sure you have it!

## **2025 Recap of Proposed and Enacted Housing Legislation in the 2025 Legislative session**

By Janie McGuigan

### ***Housing Needs in NM***

Ensuring affordable housing options for people of all income levels is crucial for a well-functioning economy. That said New Mexico is facing an unprecedented housing shortage and related affordability crisis. Since 2017 New Mexico has seen homelessness increase 87%, 47% faster than the national average. Median rents in New Mexico have increased 60% in that same time, as compared to 27% nationally. Advocating for more housing units to be built or rehabbed in New Mexico (whether multi family or single family) will ultimately place more housing units in the market, ease the housing shortage and bring down rents for low to moderate income households.

### ***Advocacy at the 2025 Legislative Session***

Each Legislative Session the LWVNM establishes priority areas to track legislation and concentrate its lobbying efforts on. For the 2025 Session, Housing was designated as one of the four Legislative Priority groups – the other priority areas were: Environment, Health Care Priority and Voting, Elections & Ethics. Each priority group formed a subcommittee that tracked legislation. The members of the Housing Priority group were Starlyn Brown, Janie McGuigan, Karen Wentworth (all with LWVCNM) and Elizabeth Bardwell (LWVSNM).

### ***Overview of Proposed Housing Legislation***

This session saw a significant increase in housing legislation introduced. Over 200 bills sought to address a wide variety of housing needs and issues including: funds for the development of new and/or rehabilitated housing (SB145 Housing Trust Fund); legislation to create a new State Office of Housing Planning and Production (SB205/HB448); and, incentives for municipalities to implement land use and zoning strategies that increase housing affordability and accessibility (HB571 Building Communities Act). Most notable was the extent of legislation introduced to address the landlord –

tenant contractual relationship. There were bills introduced to address the terms of rental applications, screening of tenants, allowable income streams, background and screening processes as well as adequate notices of fee and rent increases, e.g. SB267 (Housing Application Fees and Tenant Protections), HB43 (Housing Income to Rent Screening Calculations), HB98 (Automatic Expungement of Eviction Records), HB462 (Nonpayment of Rent Notice Period), HB253 (Sealing of Certain Court Records), HB339 (Preventing Housing Discrimination based on a Housing Applicant's Source of Income), and HB462 (Nonpayment of Rent Notice Period).

### ***Advocating for Changes in LWVNM Housing Position***

Noting these changes in the landscape of housing needs to ensure access to affordable rental housing, the Housing Priority group researched other LWV Housing positions across the U.S. and advocated for the adoption of this statement in the LWVNM Housing position: '*Protection of the rights of both tenants and landlords*' from the LWV State of California, Housing Position. This change and other amendments to the State position include: encouraging energy efficient building electrification; promoting developments that provide a mix of market rate and affordable housing units; and, supporting homeless programs that provide both shelter and services for targeted populations – and were submitted and accepted by concurrence by the LWVNM Board midway through the Session. These changes allowed housing advocacy work during the latter part of the 2025 Session to include a broader array of housing needs in its advocacy portfolio.

Update – at the LWVNM Convention April 26 – 29, concurrence with the proposed LWVNM Housing position updates passed by unanimous vote.

### ***The Final Outcome***

In the final analysis, two housing-related bills passed the House and Senate and were sent to the Governor's office for signature. **SB267**, Housing Application Fees and Tenant Protections, which caps late fees and application fees and requires adequate notice of any changes in fee structure, was signed by the Governor on April 8; and, **HB571**, Building Communities Act, which creates incentives for municipalities that reform their zoning codes to promote the construction of affordable housing, was pocket vetoed. The rest of the housing bills died in either the Senate Judiciary Committee or the House Judiciary Committee, respectively. Creating more affordable housing to ease the impact on the housing market and remove barriers for unhoused persons is a daunting challenge. It is important that we continue to advocate for the development of, and equal access to, affordable housing.

## ***LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

**President:**  
Starlyn Brown

**1st Co-Vice Presidents/Voter Guide:**  
Karen Wentworth & Lani Desaulniers

**2nd Vice President/Membership:**  
Elizabeth Shields

**3rd Vice President/Program:**  
Karen Douglas

**4th Vice President/Development:**  
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**Director/Office Manager:**  
Terry Quinn

**Director/Historian & Special Projects:**  
Jennifer Black

**Director/Webmaster/Zoom Host:** Linda Miller

**Advocacy Team/Observer Corps:**  
Karen Wentworth

**Volunteer Coordinator:**  
Linda Miller

If you need help with Zoom,  
please reach out to Zoom host, Linda Miller,  
lmiller@unm.edu

Please submit your articles for the monthly Voter by  
the 15th of each month to Michal Mudd at:

[VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com](mailto:VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com)

## ***LWVCNM CALENDAR***

**May 5<sup>th</sup> (Monday)**

**Last day to Register for  
LWVCNM Annual Meeting**

**May 7<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) 5:30 pm**

**LWVCNM Board Meeting, ZOOM until further  
notice. All members welcome.**

**May 10<sup>th</sup> (Saturday)**

**LWVCNM Annual Meeting**

**Registration: 9:30 am – 10:00 am**

**Program & Lunch 10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**@ Indian Pueblo Cultural Center,**

**May 17<sup>th</sup> (Saturday). 10 am - noon**

**Inaugural Saturday Coffee gathering  
at LWVCNM Office Conference Room, 6739  
Academy Rd NE**

**May 28<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) 5:30 pm**

**LVVCNM Book Club**

**@ LWVCNM Office Conference Room,  
6739 Academy Rd NE  
See website for info**

**June 3rd (Tuesday) 4 - 7 pm**

**Happy Hour**

**Steel Bender Brewery  
8305 2nd St NW, Los Ranchos de  
Albuquerque**

**June 4<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) 5:30 pm**

**LWVCNM Board Meeting, ZOOM until further  
notice. All members welcome.**

**June 12<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) 12 Noon**

**LWVCNM Monthly Educational Meeting  
In person and ZOOM  
Topic: Affordable Housing – Beyond the  
Unhoused  
Speakers: CABQ.gov officials**

# OBSERVER REPORTS



## **Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission**

**March/April 2025**

**Karen Wentworth**

Present: Barbara Baca, Frank Baca, Adriann Barboa, Walt Benton, Eric Olivas

The Bernalillo County Commission is focused on providing Industrial Revenue Bonds for companies planning to expand and purchase equipment for use in the county:

- 3D Glass Solutions, \$30 million in IRB

Taxable Revenue Bonds

- Public Service Company of New Mexico, \$225 million  
For a battery energy storage system on the Pajarito Mesa next to the PNM substation.

The Observer Committee is closely following public financial commitments for housing. The commission has approved both market rate and affordable housing bonds.

- Taxable IRB, \$15,700,000. for Sawmill mixed use retail and commercial space, with 140 market rate apartments.
- Taxable IRB \$70,400,000 for improvements and real property for Chaco Residences.
- Taxable IRB, \$76,300,000 for Sawmill Project Hotel. Five-story hotel with 115 guest rooms and commercial space.

### Project Revenue Bonds for Affordable Housing Projects in cooperation with the Albuquerque Housing Authority

The BCC approved \$16,500,000 for rehabilitating an existing 42-unit public housing property and to construct an additional 46 units in the Central/Coors Blvd. area. The units currently house 175 people. Construction will allow for 366 new residents.

The commission also approved the annual application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The money the county received this year allowed it to provide 4,000 housing vouchers for short term stays in hotels and rental units for people in need. It is not clear whether the grant money will be available this year, because the Trump administration has announced plans to cut the program.

### Speed Cameras

The county intends to increase the number of speed cameras on major roadways. Currently 7 of the 11 cameras are located in the Southwest portion of the city along Coors Blvd. Commissioner Olivas voiced concern that the cameras are primarily located in minority areas and was told the cameras are located in areas of the most serious automobile crashes.



## **Sandoval County Commission regular meeting**

**March 26, 2025**

**Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)**

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr

### **Description of Issues Relevant to the League**

#### Transparency in State and Local Governments

The Commission discussed the status of IPRA in Sandoval County currently, after a member of the public proposed that an IPRA task force be formed. Some counties are addressing a request backlog, as well as sorting out what kinds of information are confidential and cannot be disclosed. The county attorney cited an example of a large load on the county coming from only a few requestors, such as Lexus/Nexus, a larger corporation based in London which requests IPRA data for their research and then sells it for profit. Several state bills were introduced to provide protections for various similar circumstances. IPRA is an unfunded mandate at the county level.

#### **As background:**

LWVCNM expects all state and local governments, executive and legislative, to follow the requirements of the Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA).

### **Additional Comments**

#### Public Comment

Two of 7 speakers expressed concerns about funding to properly staff the new animal shelter under construction. Two other speakers promoted a rewritten early US history.

### **Sandoval County Commission Website**

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>



## **Sandoval County Commission regular meeting**

**April 9, 2025**

**Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)**

Present: Michael Meek (Chair), Jordan Juarez (Vice Chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch, Jon Herr

### **Description of Issues Relevant to the League**

No topics for which the League has an advocacy position were taken up during this meeting.

### **Additional Comments**

#### Public Comment

Five of 7 speakers advocated for more restrictive voting requirements and two celebrated DOGE activities.

The commission voted 3-2 against moving to adopt a resolution extending public comment from 2 to 3 minutes per person.

### **Sandoval County Commission Website**

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>





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**The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization is a nonpartisan political organization, that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy by education and advocacy.**