



STATEMENT: The Republican Party of New Mexico Strongly Opposes “Open Primaries”

Albuquerque, February 14—In this session, legislators presented four bills to create an “open primary,” meaning voters do not have to affiliate with the political party of the primary they vote in.

The Republican Party of New Mexico does not support “open primaries” as described in [SB 73](#), [SJR 7](#), [SB 175](#), and [HB 54](#). RPNM also opposes rank-choice voting and eliminating Pre-Primary Conventions.

RPNM opposes an open primary for the following reasons:

- An open primary creates the vulnerability of “crossover” voting, where members of another party may try to influence their opponent party’s nomination. Sabotage could arise from this vulnerability allowing opponents to nominate a weaker candidate who is easier for them to defeat in the general election.
- In 2019, The New Mexico Supreme Court shot down a legal challenge by former Democratic Attorney General Paul Bardacke, upholding New Mexico’s right to a closed primary.
- States where the open primary has been adopted express regret later but once implemented, it is nearly impossible to reverse.

Supporters of the open primary process point to an ever-growing “Decline to State” or Independent body of voters who do not get to participate in the primary. However, “Same Day Registration” in New Mexico covers this. It allows registered Independent and Decline to State voters to affiliate with a major party and vote in that party’s primary at any voting location up until election day.

The most important reason we support a closed primary system is so that voters will align with a political party that represents their values and belief systems. Those who do not align with the Republican Party platform of values should not be able to decide the candidate who will represent our party. We cannot diminish our Republican voice and values of faith, family, and freedom by implementing open primaries.