

2023 Voter Pulse Survey New Mexico Chamber of Commerce

New Mexicans are hopeful for change that will continue to move New Mexico forward, improve education, diversify the economy, decrease crime, and improve access to healthcare and affordable housing. A 2023 survey conducted by the New Mexico Chamber of Commerce and Strategies 360 highlights the changes that New Mexicans feel are necessary to move the state forward and how they would like to see the budget surplus used to support those changes. The Chamber is pleased that many of the priorities expressed in the poll match those of the New Mexico Chamber as well as those expressed by Governor Lujan Grisham during her State of the State message this year.

Budget Surplus Investment

New Mexicans clearly understand our budget surplus should be used to set our economy up for long-term success. The majority supporting long-term investments with the surplus, with improving public safety and public education as the top two priorities for the surplus.

How do New Mexicans feel the \$3.5 billion surplus should be spent?

- Invest in longer-term priorities to strengthen New Mexico for the future (55%)
- Invest in near-term priorities that provide immediate relief and benefits (27%)
- Save for a rainy day (13%)

Specifically, the voters believe the surplus spend should focus on:

- Reducing crime and increasing public safety (49%)
- Improving Education and public schools (43%)
- Creating Jobs and growing the economy (31%)

Overall Direction of New Mexico

35% of New Mexico voters think the state is heading in the right direction, while 51% say the state is on the wrong track.

Of the topics polled, voters are most satisfied with how the state has handled the climate and the environment with a 63% approval rating, while 33% are dissatisfied.

Voters are most dissatisfied with public safety and public education, the top two areas of where they would like to see the surplus invested:

- Crime & Public Safety (75%)
- Public Education (61%)
- Water and Drought (59%)

Education

61% of voters are dissatisfied with New Mexico public education and believe we should use the budget surplus to invest in proven solutions to help our students succeed. It is critical for our existing population for attracting the workforce we need to move New Mexico ahead.

To improve education, voters believe:

- New Mexico should invest in high-quality reading and math tutoring in K-12 public schools (91%)
- Provide greater opportunities for career training and career technical education (85%)
- Require all 3rd graders to read at grade level before moving on to 4th grade, with appropriate exceptions for students with disabilities or if English is a student's second language (79%)

Voters have less support for:

- Extending the K-12 public school year by two weeks (46%)
- Reducing the number of credits required to graduate high school and eliminate some higher-level requirements such as Algebra II (32%)

Crime & Public Safety

75% of voters are unsatisfied with public safety and crime in New Mexico and believe we must continue and grow our investment in public safety.

40% of New Mexican's have witnessed shoplifting in the last twelve months.

To improve public safety, voters support:

- Increasing funding and support for mental health and substance abuse services (80%)
- Making it easier for a court to hold a suspect prior to trial (76%)
- Increasing the number of law enforcement officers in your community through more police funding (75%)

Other Top Issues

Healthcare

- 50% of voters said they were satisfied with their current access to healthcare, highlighting an opportunity for the state to partner and help expand access to healthcare across the state.
- 71% said they, or a family member, had experienced long wait times to see a primary care physician or specialist in the last year.

Housing Affordability

- 58% of voters are dissatisfied with the availability and affordability of housing in New Mexico

Economic Diversification

- 53% of voters are currently dissatisfied with the state’s economic growth and diversification

This survey was conducted statewide by Strategies 360 on January 12-14, 2023, among 500 registered voters with a margin of error of $\pm 4.4\%$.

The **New Mexico Chamber of Commerce**, through the leadership and vision of the New Mexico business community, drives positive change by developing and advocating for effective public policy initiatives that will make our state a leader in industry, innovation, economic competitiveness and overall quality of life.

Strategies 360 is a full-service community relations firm focusing on research, communications, and governmental affairs. With a focus in the western states, Strategies 360 New Mexico is located in Santa and works throughout the state.

For questions about the survey, please contact:

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Appendix A

Survey questions and results.

Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

New Mexico Chamber of Commerce Toplines

[PHONE] Hello, may I please speak with (NAME ON LIST)? My name is _____ from _____, a public opinion polling firm. We are conducting a short survey about some issues people have been talking about lately. We're not selling anything and I will not ask for a donation at any time. It will take only a few minutes and all responses will be anonymous and used only for research purposes.

[WEB]¹ New Mexico Opinion Research is conducting a scientific research study of New Mexico residents. All responses are confidential and for research purposes only. We are NOT selling anything, and we will NOT ask you for money.

1 For clarity, only the phone version of the question language is displayed below.

In general, do you feel things in New Mexico are heading in the right direction or are things off on the wrong track?

| | |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Right direction | 35% |
| Wrong track | 51 |
| DK/NA/REFUSED | 14 |

I'm going to read you a list of issues. For each, please tell me whether you are very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the way things are going with that issue in New Mexico.

| RANDOMIZED | TOTAL SATIS | TOTAL DISSAT | Very Sat | Smwt Sat | Smwt Dissat | Very Dissat | DK/REF |
|--|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Climate and the environment | 63% | 33% | 20% | 42% | 22% | 10% | 4% |
| High-speed internet access | 57% | 39% | 20 | 37 | 20 | 18 | 4 |
| Access to health care | 50% | 47% | 15 | 35 | 23 | 24 | 3 |
| Economic growth and diversification | 41% | 53% | 7 | 33 | 27 | 26 | 6 |
| Housing availability and affordability | 36% | 58% | 9 | 28 | 24 | 33 | 6 |
| Water and drought | 35% | 59% | 6 | 29 | 34 | 25 | 6 |
| Public education | 33% | 61% | 7 | 25 | 21 | 40 | 7 |
| Crime and public safety | 23% | 75% | 4 | 19 | 22 | 53 | 2 |

As you may know, the state of New Mexico currently has a budget surplus of \$3.5 billion dollars. I am going to read you another list of issues, and this time, please tell me which TWO you think should be the state’s top priorities when it comes to using the budget surplus. **(RANDOMIZED)**

MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED; TOTAL DOES NOT ADD TO 100%

| | |
|--|-----|
| Reducing crime and increasing public safety..... | 49% |
| Improving education and public schools..... | 43 |
| Creating jobs and growing the economy..... | 31 |
| Making housing more affordable..... | 23 |
| Strengthening water infrastructure and combatting drought..... | 20 |
| Addressing climate change and protecting the environment..... | 10 |
| Expanding access to high-speed internet..... | 6 |
| Stabilizing and strengthening the electric grid..... | 5 |
| Other..... | 3 |
| DK/NA/REFUSED..... | 2 |

When it comes to the budget surplus, which one of the following approaches do you prefer? **(RANDOMIZE)**

| | |
|--|-----|
| Invest in near-term priorities that provide immediate relief and benefits..... | 27% |
| Invest in longer-term priorities to strengthen New Mexico for the future..... | 55 |
| Save the surplus for a rainy day..... | 13 |
| DK/NA/REFUSED..... | 6 |

I’d like to read you some education proposals that may be considered. For each one, please tell me if you support or oppose that proposal.

| RANDOMIZED | TOTAL SUPPORT | TOTAL OPPOSE | Strongly Support | Smwt Support | Smwt Oppose | Strongly Oppose | DK/ REF |
|--|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| [READING] Invest in high-quality reading and math tutoring in K-12 public schools. | 91% | 5% | 66% | 26% | 3% | 2% | 4% |
| [COMMUNITY COLLEGE] Provide financial incentives to New Mexico community colleges to focus on courses in good-paying career fields and career technical education. | 85% | 8% | 53 | 32 | 6 | 3 | 7 |
| [3RD GRADE] Require all 3 rd graders to read at grade level before moving on to the 4 th grade, with exceptions for students with disabilities or for whom English is their second language. | 79% | 16% | 50 | 29 | 8 | 8 | 5 |
| [SCHOOL YEAR] Extend the K-12 public school year by two weeks. | 46% | 40% | 25 | 22 | 18 | 22 | 14 |
| [GRADUATION] Reduce the number of credits required to graduate high school and eliminate some higher-level requirements such as algebra two. | 32% | 61% | 13 | 19 | 17 | 43 | 7 |

Next, I am going to read you a few proposals related to public safety. For each one, please tell me how effective you think that proposal would be in improving public safety – very effective, somewhat effective, not too effective, or not effective at all.

| RANDOMIZED | TOTAL EFFECTIVE | TOTAL NOT | Very Effective | Smwt Effective | Not Too Effective | Not Effective At All | DK/REF |
|--|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Increase funding and support for mental health and substance abuse services in your community. | 80% | 16% | 51 % | 30% | 11% | 4% | 4% |
| Make it easier for a court to hold a suspect prior to trial. | 76% | 16% | 48 | 29 | 9 | 6 | 8 |
| Increase the number of law enforcement officers in your community through more police funding. | 75% | 21% | 50 | 26 | 11 | 10 | 4 |

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| RANDOMIZED | TOTAL EFFECTIVE | TOTAL NOT | Very Effective | Smwt Effective | Not Too Effective | Not Effective At All | DK/REF |
|--|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Increase funding and support for mental health and substance abuse services in your community. | 80% | 16% | 51% | 30% | 11% | 4% | 4% |
| Make it easier for a court to hold a suspect prior to trial. | 76% | 16% | 48 | 29 | 9 | 6 | 8 |
| Increase the number of law enforcement officers in your community through more police funding. | 75% | 21% | 50 | 26 | 11 | 10 | 4 |

Over the last twelve months, have you or someone in your household personally witnessed an incidence of shoplifting? (**ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES**)

MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED; TOTAL DOES NOT ADD TO 100%

YES.....40%
 Yes, I have.....33
 Yes, someone in my household has.....12
 No.....8
 DK/NA/REFUSED..... 2

Over the last twelve months, have you or someone in your household experienced long wait times to see a primary care physician or specialist? (**ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES**)

MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED; TOTAL DOES NOT ADD TO 100%

YES.....71%
 Yes, I have.....55
 Yes, someone in my household has.....28
 No.....27

DK/NA/REFUSED..... 3

Regardless of how you plan to vote, in politics, as of today, do you consider yourself **(ROTATE)** a Republican, a Democrat, or an independent?

DEMOCRAT.....41%
 REPUBLICAN.....33

 Strong Democrat.....23
 Not strong Democrat.....8

 Independent, lean Democratic...10
 Independent.....10
 Independent, lean Republican....10

 Not strong Republican.....7
 Strong Republican.....16
 Something else.....4

DK/NA/REFUSED.....12

When it comes to politics, do you consider yourself to be... **(PINWHEEL ROTATE)**

LIBERAL.....26%
 CONSERVATIVE.....32

 Very liberal.....12
 Somewhat liberal.....13

 Moderate.....31

 Somewhat conservative.....18
 Very conservative.....14

DK/NA/REFUSED.....0

DK = Don't Know
 NA = Not Available
 REF= Refused