

# GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE BUSINESS QUESTIONNAIRE



**Last updated: May 1, 2026**

**To support an informed business community, we invited candidates for Governor of New Mexico to respond to thirteen questions focused on economic growth, workforce, taxation, regulation, and the state's overall business climate.**

The candidates included on this page are those who have formally filed and are registered with the New Mexico Secretary of State for the 2026 election cycle and met applicable requirements at the time of publication. This list may change as the election process continues. Independent candidates will be added as they are verified and qualified by the state.

As of this publication, participating candidates include:

- Sam Bregman (Democrat)
- Deb Haaland (Democrat)
- Gregg Hull (Republican)
- Duke Rodriguez (Republican)
- Doug Turner (Republican)

Responses are presented by candidate, allowing visitors to review each candidate's positions in full and better understand their approach across issues. Each candidate was asked the same thirteen questions, which are included within their section for consistency and transparency. Responses are published as submitted and have not been edited for content.

Participation in this questionnaire was voluntary, and not all candidates may have responded to every question.

This information is provided for informational and educational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement, recommendation, or rating of any candidate. The New Mexico Chamber of Commerce does not verify or fact-check candidate responses. Individuals are encouraged to review the information carefully and draw their own conclusions.

# SAM BREGMANN

## **1. Economic Competitiveness:** What are the top three actions you would take in your first two years to improve New Mexico's competitiveness for business investment and job creation? How would you measure success?

In my first two years, I will focus on cutting red tape by implementing firm timelines on permitting, investing in high-growth industries like clean energy, film, and health tech, and expanding workforce training tied directly to employer needs. Success will be measured by job growth, rising wages, new business formation, and keeping more New Mexicans working and living in-state.

## **2. Tax & Fiscal Policy:** What specific changes, if any, would you make to New Mexico's tax structure, including the gross receipts tax (GRT), to improve the business climate while maintaining fiscal stability? What trade-offs are you willing to make?

I will continue targeted tax relief while reforming the gross receipts tax by eliminating it on healthcare services and reducing burdens where they limit growth. I will also eliminate state income taxes for New Mexicans aged 65 and older to provide meaningful relief to seniors on fixed incomes. At the same time, I will maintain strong reserves to ensure fiscal stability, prioritizing long-term growth and affordability over short-term revenue maximization.

## **3. Workforce & Education:** What are your top priorities to better align New Mexico's education and workforce systems with employer needs? Which outcomes (e.g., job placement, credential attainment, wage growth) will you prioritize?

My priority is aligning education with real workforce needs by expanding career and technical education, apprenticeships, and partnerships between schools, community colleges, and employers. I will focus on outcomes like job placement, industry-recognized credentials, and wage growth to ensure students are prepared for good-paying careers.

## **4. Energy & Infrastructure:** How will you balance reliability, affordability, and environmental goals in New Mexico's energy portfolio? What specific infrastructure investments (energy, water, broadband, transportation) will you prioritize?

I will take a balanced approach that ensures energy is reliable, affordable, and forward-looking by investing in both clean energy and the infrastructure needed to support it. This includes building out electricity capacity and expanding transmission lines to meet growing demand. I will also prioritize broadband expansion, water systems, and transportation infrastructure to support long-term economic growth.

## **5. Innovation & Emerging Industries:** What targeted strategies would you implement to attract and scale high-growth industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, aerospace, AI, data centers)? How will you ensure these industries create broad economic benefits across the state?

To attract and scale high-growth industries like aerospace, advanced manufacturing, AI, and data centers, I will pair targeted incentives with workforce development and strong public-private partnerships. I will ensure these industries create broad economic benefits by requiring local hiring, supporting small businesses, and expanding opportunities in rural and underserved communities.

## **6. Healthcare Access:** What specific steps will you take to improve access to affordable healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved areas, while maintaining financial sustainability of the system?

I will expand access to care by incentivizing capacity, increasing the number of providers through interstate compacts, and strengthening the healthcare workforce. I will eliminate the gross receipts tax on medical services, provide tax credits for practitioners in rural areas, and offer tax credits to offset medical malpractice premiums. Additionally, for every year a provider practices in New Mexico, they will receive a year reduction in medical school debt. These steps will improve access while maintaining financial sustainability.

# SAM BREGMANN

## **7. Regulatory Environment: What changes would you make to New Mexico's regulatory and permitting processes to improve predictability, speed, and transparency for businesses?**

I will streamline permitting and reduce delays by setting clear timelines and increasing transparency, while also leveling the playing field so the regulatory process is consistent, fair, and predictable for all businesses. This will give companies the certainty they need to invest and grow in New Mexico.

## **8. Housing & Cost of Living: How will you address housing availability and affordability to support workforce growth and economic development?**

I will address housing affordability by increasing supply, setting a goal of building 5,000 homes per year, and cutting permitting delays. The state will also provide down payment assistance to help more families achieve homeownership, alongside efforts to modernize zoning and incentivize starter and workforce housing.

## **9. Public Safety & Business Climate: What role do public safety and community stability play in economic development, and what actions will you take to address them?**

Public safety is foundational to economic development. I will fully fund law enforcement and crack down on violent crime, property crime, and organized crime, while also investing in behavioral health and prevention strategies to create safer, more stable communities for families and businesses.

## **10. Rural & Regional Economic Development: How will your administration support economic growth in rural and tribal communities while ensuring statewide opportunity?**

I will ensure rural and tribal communities are not left behind by investing in infrastructure, expanding access to healthcare and education, and targeting workforce and economic development programs to regional strengths. Strong partnerships with tribal governments will be central to this effort.

## **11. Water & Natural Resources: How will you address long-term water availability and management to support economic growth, agriculture, and community sustainability?**

I will prioritize long-term water sustainability by creating a cabinet-level Department of Water Resources to coordinate water management for economic development across all users. This will ensure smarter planning, stronger infrastructure, and a sustainable future for agriculture, communities, and industry.

## **12. Government Efficiency & Accountability: What specific steps will you take to improve efficiency, accountability, and performance in state government?**

I will improve government performance by setting clear goals, requiring transparency through regular public reporting, modernizing technology systems, and holding agencies accountable for results. Efficiency and accountability will be core to restoring trust.

## **13. Business Engagement: How will you ensure ongoing, meaningful engagement with the business community in shaping policy decisions?**

I will maintain ongoing, meaningful engagement with the business community through regular communication, public-private partnerships, and advisory groups. Businesses will have a seat at the table to help shape policies that drive growth and opportunity across New Mexico.

# DEB HAALAND

## **1. Economic Competitiveness: What are the top three actions you would take in your first two years to improve New Mexico's competitiveness for business investment and job creation? How would you measure success?**

New Mexico's economy is built on businesses of every size—from the more than 166,000 small businesses that employ a majority of the state's private workforce to the larger employers that anchor regional economies and global supply chains. In my first two years, three actions will be at the center of my work to make New Mexico more competitive for business investment and job creation. First, I will consolidate economic development under a single, accountable structure. On Day One, I plan to sign executive orders establishing an Office of Small Business and an Office of Rural Development within the Economic Development Department, giving entrepreneurs a permanent clearinghouse for grants, capital, site readiness, and permitting support, and filling the gaps left by federal funding cuts. I will pursue legislation in the 2027 session to codify and fund both offices permanently. Second, I will cut the red tape that's holding New Mexico businesses back. I will direct every agency head, on Day One, to identify and eliminate unnecessary barriers in state processes, professional certifications, housing development, regulations, and permits, with clear timelines, public reporting, and accountability. Businesses should know what to expect from the state government, and they should be able to get a straight answer from a real person in a reasonable amount of time. Third, I will rebuild the state government's capacity to deliver. As Secretary of the Interior, I managed a department of nearly 70,000 employees, and I understand what it takes to make a large organization work for the people it serves. I will fill vacant positions at state agencies by streamlining hiring, raising pay for public employees, and removing unnecessary four-year degree requirements where practical experience can qualify. Furthermore, with significant federal workforce shifts happening, I will aggressively recruit top-tier federal talent to bring their expertise to New Mexico. A state government that can't answer the phone and doesn't have the personnel to process a permit application can't be a good partner to business. I will measure success by concrete outcomes: reductions in average permitting times; growth in new business formation; jobs created through the Site Readiness Fund and in priority sectors including advanced manufacturing, aerospace, clean energy, film, and the outdoor recreation economy; and increases in credential attainment and workforce participation.

## **2. Tax & Fiscal Policy: What specific changes, if any, would you make to New Mexico's tax structure, including the gross receipts tax (GRT), to improve the business climate while maintaining fiscal stability? What trade-offs are you willing to make?**

Tax policy in New Mexico has to do three things at once: keep the state fiscally stable through federal volatility, provide targeted relief where the tax code is actively holding back growth, and make sure the tax code works for New Mexicans across income. I also recognize the long-term need to work with the Legislature to address the pyramiding effect on business-to-business transactions; we can make immediate progress by focusing on healthcare and on homebuilding costs. On healthcare, I will work with the Legislature on targeted GRT relief for healthcare services—structured as state tax credits so that cities and counties are held harmless—so that New Mexico is no longer the only state in the country taxing medical care at the provider level. I will build on the recent physician income tax credit and medical equipment GRT deduction by extending the existing GRT deduction for copayments and deductibles, making it permanent, and expanding it to cover coinsurance. Addressing healthcare GRT is one of the single most concrete things New Mexico can do to retain and recruit providers, lower costs for working families, and build the provider capacity required to actually deliver healthcare services statewide. On housing, I will pursue a reduction in the gross receipts tax on construction materials, to bring down the cost of building the homes New Mexico urgently needs. The same “held harmless” principle applies here: any reduction should be structured so that cities and counties are not left absorbing the fiscal impact. More broadly, I will not pursue GRT changes that would disrupt local government budgets. Any structural reform has to protect the revenue cities and counties rely on to fund police, fire, and public services that people and businesses depend on too. The trade-offs I am willing to make are straightforward. I will not cut

# DEB HAALAND

into the permanent funds that provide long-term fiscal stability, and I will not pursue tax cuts that rely on unrealistic revenue projections. I will invest where investment pays off—in workforce, infrastructure, and the services employers need—and I will hold the line on waste and duplication in state government so that taxpayer dollars yield results.

### **3. Workforce & Education: What are your top priorities to better align New Mexico’s education and workforce systems with employer needs? Which outcomes (e.g., job placement, credential attainment, wage growth) will you prioritize?**

Aligning New Mexico’s education and workforce systems with employer needs is one of the central commitments in my education plan, and it is an area where state government, employers, labor, and educators can make rapid progress together. My top priorities are: Expand career and technical education starting in middle school. We will cultivate the next generation of skilled trades workers by partnering with industry leaders and experienced apprenticeship programs, and expand non-trades pathways in hospitality, arts and entertainment, and technology through community colleges and high schools. New Mexico-based employers will have a direct seat at the table in designing training in our public schools. Grow apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship. I will increase state apprenticeship funding, expand pre-apprenticeship opportunities including for students with disabilities, and ensure apprenticeship is treated as a respected postsecondary pathway with access to the same supports—financial aid, counseling, credit for competencies—as other postsecondary students. Meet priority workforce needs through the Opportunity Scholarship. New Mexico faces acute shortages in education, healthcare, social work, public safety, and the skilled trades powering our energy and manufacturing sectors. I will expand the Opportunity Scholarship to cover graduate education and vocational certificates for New Mexicans entering these fields, so cost is not a barrier to filling the jobs our state needs filled. Accelerate entry into the workforce through licensing reform. State government shouldn’t be the bottleneck keeping willing workers out of a job. We will work to streamline occupational licensing, expand interstate reciprocity, and expedite credentialing for military veterans and their spouses, ensuring that qualified professionals can get to work in New Mexico without months of bureaucratic delay. Prepare students for the changing economy. I will support financial literacy, civics, media literacy, and data literacy for every high schooler entering the job market. I will prioritize the outcomes that matter most to workers, employers, and families: credential attainment in high-demand fields, job placement rates within six months of program completion, wage growth for credential-holders, and retention in New Mexico—because too many of the workers our state trains end up leaving to pursue careers elsewhere.

### **4. Energy & Infrastructure: How will you balance reliability, affordability, and environmental goals in New Mexico’s energy portfolio? What specific infrastructure investments (energy, water, broadband, transportation) will you prioritize?**

New Mexico’s energy future has to deliver on three things at once: reliability, so that families and businesses can count on the lights staying on; affordability, so that utility bills aren’t crushing working households or making New Mexico uncompetitive for employers; and a responsible transition, so that we meet our emissions commitments and protect our communities. Under my administration, New Mexico will be a leader in American energy. As Secretary of the Interior, I oversaw the approval of major clean energy projects that have brought thousands of good-paying jobs to New Mexico, including the SunZia transmission line. I know how to get big energy projects built, and I know that predictable, efficient permitting is often crucial for a project’s success. My priorities for New Mexico’s energy portfolio: Grid modernization and resilience. Invest in grid modernization grants so that utilities can upgrade aging transmission and distribution infrastructure, harden the grid against extreme weather, and integrate new generation reliably. Affordability for ratepayers. Protect ratepayers through strong utility oversight, expand low-income energy assistance through Energy Help NM, and support energy efficiency programs that lower bills. A pragmatic, predictable transition. New Mexico has adopted emissions reduction targets and a path to net-zero by 2050. I will work with utilities, labor, and industry

# DEB HAALAND

to hit those targets through a mix of clean generation, efficiency, and workforce transition—not by pricing energy out of reach. We will strive to provide a predictable regulatory environment while scaling the clean energy economy of the future. On infrastructure more broadly, I will prioritize four investments: Water infrastructure: fix aging systems, extending running water to Tribal communities that still lack it, and upgrading treatment to address PFAS, arsenic, and other contaminants. High speed internet: implement a statewide Dig Once rule so that broadband conduit is installed whenever a road is opened, and closing the rural gap through deployment of existing state and federal broadband resources. Transportation: launch a Safe Roads Initiative at DOT to prioritize the projects with the highest safety return, make strategic investments in critical freight and logistics routes like the I-40 Tradeport Corridor, and invest in rural bus and regional transit. Modernize state facilities: retrofit aging public buildings and schools to reduce operating costs while creating construction work.

## **5. Innovation & Emerging Industries: What targeted strategies would you implement to attract and scale high-growth industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, aerospace, AI, data centers)? How will you ensure these industries create broad economic benefits across the state?**

New Mexico sits on a distinctive foundation for innovation; we have two national laboratories at Los Alamos and Sandia, Spaceport America, a growing aerospace and defense industry, world-class universities, a film industry that's become an economic engine, and a \$3.2 billion outdoor recreation economy. My administration will work to attract and scale high-growth industries by building on what we already have, and by targeting investments that align with New Mexico's values, resources, and workforce. My strategies: Make New Mexico a ready place to land. I will expand the Site Readiness Fund so that shovel-ready sites with utilities, water, and transportation access are available for employers in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, and clean energy manufacturing. Site readiness is the single most common reason high-growth employers pass over New Mexico for other states. Build the workforce pipeline the industries actually need. The Career Technical Education, apprenticeship, and Opportunity Scholarship commitments in my education and workforce agenda are directly aligned with the skills high-growth industries require, including advanced manufacturing technicians, aerospace engineers and machinists, semiconductor and battery manufacturing, and IT. Partner with the national labs and universities. I will work with Los Alamos, Sandia, UNM, and NMSU to commercialize research, support spinouts, and anchor private-sector investment around lab capacity—particularly in quantum, microelectronics, advanced materials, and clean energy technology. Grow the border economy. The Santa Teresa industrial corridor is one of New Mexico's fastest-growing economic regions, anchored by manufacturing, logistics, and cross-border trade with Mexico. I will leverage New Mexico's unique position on the border to build international partnerships, attract trade-facing manufacturing investment, and support the businesses that move goods across the border every day, while working to reduce the federal policy uncertainty that is currently driving up costs and limiting hiring for border employers. Grow the industries where New Mexico has an established advantage. The film industry has generated record economic activity and thousands of good jobs, and I will protect the incentive structure that made that possible. I will also open regional film offices to expand film production to every corner of the state, and invest earlier in K-12 and community college film-industry training so New Mexico is growing its own next-generation film workforce rather than importing talent from out of state. The outdoor recreation economy is already a \$3.2 billion industry that I will grow through state parks investment, outdoor recreation entrepreneurship, and the Outdoor Equity Fund. Ensure smart growth and broad benefit. High-growth industries create real economic benefits for New Mexico only if the jobs go to New Mexicans, the tax revenue stays in the state, and the environmental and resource impacts are consistent with New Mexico's long-term interests. For highly energy-intensive and water-intensive emerging industries—specifically AI and data centers—my priority is responsible growth. We welcome tech investment; however these facilities must be true partners in our clean energy future and in the local communities where they operate. To protect existing

# DEB HAALAND

New Mexico ratepayers and businesses from absorbing the costs of massive new energy demand, I will require high-energy-demand industries to build their own energy infrastructure, and I will ensure that state incentive packages for new industries include clear commitments on New Mexico hiring and local contracting.

## **6. Healthcare Access: What specific steps will you take to improve access to affordable healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved areas, while maintaining financial sustainability of the system?**

Healthcare access is critical for New Mexicans and the long-term growth of our economy. Too many rural hospitals are on the brink, too many New Mexicans drive hours for a primary care appointment, and too many working families are one medical bill away from financial ruin. My plan addresses access, affordability, and system sustainability together. I will aim to do the following: Fix the provider shortage. I will expand the state's health professional loan repayment program, increase the practitioner tax credit and extend it to underserved urban areas, cover licensure fees for providers committing to practice in high-need fields like primary care, nursing, and behavioral health, and invest in medical residencies at UNM Health Sciences Center and at new residency sites across the state. Protect rural hospitals. In many New Mexico counties, the local hospital is not just a medical lifeline—it is among the largest employers. I will work with willing rural hospitals on a pilot moving toward stable, predictable funding, so hospitals can focus on keeping their communities healthy rather than chasing fee-for-service revenue. I will invest in primary care, data systems, and state capacity so New Mexico is positioned to pursue global budgets and a Rural Care System with federal partnership when the opportunity arises. Lower costs. I will work with the Legislature on targeted GRT relief for healthcare services, structured as state tax credits so cities and counties are held harmless. I will support the Office of the Superintendent of Insurance in enforcing network adequacy, prior authorization reforms, and existing PBM rules. Expand care close to home. I will expand public health clinics and preventive services, including in and near Tribal communities; build on the Rural OB Access & Maternal Services telehealth model for virtual prenatal care statewide; and make Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics a permanent part of New Mexico's Medicaid Waiver. Strengthen quality and competition in healthcare. Healthy competition between providers keeps costs down and quality up. I will work with the Legislature to support independent practices facing consolidation pressure, tackle the long-term care crisis by expanding resources and training pipelines to help facilities recruit and retain frontline healthcare workers, and ensure existing consumer protections in healthcare are enforced. Financial sustainability runs through all of this. Every commitment I've made is designed to reduce waste, lower downstream costs, and keep New Mexicans healthier. My full healthcare plan is available at [debhaaland.com/debsplan](https://debhaaland.com/debsplan).

## **7. Regulatory Environment: What changes would you make to New Mexico's regulatory and permitting processes to improve predictability, speed, and transparency for businesses?**

I will approach regulation with simple and efficient standards: rules should be clear, predictable, enforceable, and proportionate. Rules that don't meet that standard should be fixed or eliminated, and rules that protect New Mexicans should be enforced consistently. The Day One red-tape executive order I described above will anchor this work, directing every agency to identify and eliminate unnecessary barriers across state processes, certifications, housing development, regulations, and permits. Beyond that initial directive, my approach to regulatory reform will include: A single entry point for businesses. I will coordinate a one-stop intake for businesses that need to interact with multiple agencies, including on professional licensing questions, so entrepreneurs aren't bouncing between offices to figure out what they need. Consistent enforcement. Businesses deserve to know that rules will be enforced the same way for every competitor. I will invest in agency capacity so that the burden of compliance doesn't fall on the businesses that follow the rules while bad actors go unchallenged. Strict timelines and tracking. When a business submits a permit or application, it shouldn't go into a bureaucratic black hole. Building on my plan to implement a shot clock for housing developments, we will establish clear processing timelines across state agencies and invest in modern tracking dashboards so applicants know exactly where their paperwork is, and when they will get an answer.

# DEB HAALAND

## **8. Housing & Cost of Living: How will you address housing availability and affordability to support workforce growth and economic development?**

Housing availability and affordability are among the biggest obstacles to workforce growth in New Mexico. Employers can't attract workers who can't find homes, and working New Mexicans can't take jobs in growing communities where housing costs outrun wages. I will address this with urgency. On Day One, I will stand up a Housing Response Team to coordinate builders, nonprofits, investors, tenants, and homeowners from shovel to move-in—paving the way for a permanent New Mexico Department of Housing that I will pursue through legislation in the 2027 session. My priorities: Build more housing, faster. I will set a statewide shot clock for residential housing applications so projects aren't stuck in permitting limbo, expand the Site Readiness Fund for residential development so sites are truly shovel-ready with utilities, zoning, and permitting in place, and support local governments that are willing to reform zoning to enable more housing. Reduce the cost of building. I will pursue the gross receipts tax reduction on construction materials described above, and cut red tape across the state inspection and building code process so that construction timelines reflect the urgency of the housing shortage. Invest in infrastructure that unlocks housing. Water, sewer, and road infrastructure are the constraints on new housing in many New Mexico communities. I will direct state infrastructure investment toward projects that unlock housing supply, and use state-owned assets to build housing in rural communities. Build workforce housing near the jobs that need to be filled. I will support employer-assisted and workforce housing models in rural communities where hospitals, schools, and public safety agencies are struggling to recruit because there's nowhere for workers to live. Ensure market transparency and housing stability. A stable workforce requires a transparent housing market. I will support initiatives that require plain-language rental contracts and upfront transparency on fees and costs, and I will work with the Attorney General to enforce existing laws. The full housing agenda is part of my Affordable New Mexico plan, available at [debhaaland.com/debsplan](http://debhaaland.com/debsplan).

## **9. Public Safety & Business Climate: What role do public safety and community stability play in economic development, and what actions will you take to address them?**

Public safety and community stability are foundations of economic development. Employers won't invest, workers won't relocate, and main streets won't thrive in communities that don't feel safe. My approach is Smart on Crime—building the capacity to prevent crime, respond to it effectively, hold criminals accountable, and address the root causes that drive crime. My priorities for a safer New Mexico: Modernize law enforcement. Equip rural, Tribal, and local departments with modern tools and technology to go after drug traffickers and organized crime. Coordinate state, local, Tribal, and federal agencies to target fentanyl suppliers. Launch statewide hotspot policing to focus resources on the areas with the highest violent and property crime rates. Recruit and retain officers, including through pay parity for rural departments and housing assistance to address staffing shortages. Crack down on organized retail crime. Increase funding for the Attorney General's Organized Retail Crime Unit to target the rings that are driving losses for New Mexico retailers and making communities feel unsafe. Coordinate data sharing to prosecute repeat offenders, and support police departments in targeting auto thefts and burglaries. Retail crime is a real drag on small business and Main Street vitality, and it deserves a serious response. Stand up a first-in-the-nation Office of Community Safety. Modeled on Albuquerque's nationally recognized program, the Office will deploy social workers, counselors, and behavioral health professionals to respond to non-violent crisis calls statewide, serving as a force multiplier that frees up traditional law enforcement to focus on violent crime, auto theft, and property crimes. Expand behavioral health and treatment. Open outpatient facilities and mobile clinics under the regional framework established by the Behavioral Health Reform and Investment Act, and expand treatment courts to break the cycle of addiction-driven offending—because behavioral health is driving much of the visible disorder that voters and businesses are responding to. My full public safety agenda is in A Route to a Safer New Mexico, available at [debhaaland.com/debsplan](http://debhaaland.com/debsplan).

# DEB HAALAND

## **10. Rural & Regional Economic Development: How will your administration support economic growth in rural and tribal communities while ensuring statewide opportunity?**

Rural and regional economic development is personal to me. I started a small salsa business, and I drove across the state delivering to mom-and-pop shops, so I know what it takes for a small business to get off the ground and what it means for a rural community when a local business succeeds. As the first woman elected to chair the Laguna Development Corporation Board, I saw the same dynamic at a different scale: vital businesses powering rural and regional economies, supporting jobs, services, and the communities around them. I will prioritize the following: An Office of Rural Development. Housed within the Economic Development Department, this office will be a dedicated state partner for rural communities and a clearinghouse for grants, capital, and technical assistance. Rather than navigating a maze of state agencies, rural entrepreneurs and agricultural producers will have a single partner to help them secure the capital and permits they need to scale. Rural healthcare. As described earlier, my healthcare agenda treats rural hospitals as economic infrastructure—stabilizing hospitals that are often among the largest employers in their counties, recruiting and retaining providers, and investing in care close to home. Infrastructure that closes the rural gap. A statewide Dig Once rule for broadband to finally connect our most isolated businesses, and a Safe Roads Initiative at DOT that prioritizes rural projects, including the farm-to-market roads and freight corridors that connect rural producers to broader markets. The outdoor economy. New Mexico's \$3.2 billion outdoor recreation economy is a rural economic driver. I will expand state parks, support outdoor recreation entrepreneurs, grow the Outdoor Equity Fund, and ensure our public lands remain safely accessible and well-maintained so they can continue to drive tourism dollars to rural hotels, restaurants, and outfitters. Partner with Tribal Nations. I will initiate government-to-government consultation with New Mexico's Pueblos, Tribes, and Nations on a state Tribal Economic Development Strategy, and establish a Tribal Entrepreneurship Program building on the federal Native American Business Incubators Program Act that I sponsored in Congress and that President Trump signed into law.

## **11. Water & Natural Resources: How will you address long-term water availability and management to support economic growth, agriculture, and community sustainability?**

Water is New Mexico's most important resource. It underpins agriculture, municipal growth, industry, Tribal communities, and ecosystems. As Secretary of the Interior, I led the federal agency responsible for water policy across the American West, working with states, Tribes, agricultural communities, and industry on some of the most consequential water decisions of the last several years. Water policy requires patience, partnership, and a willingness to address hard tradeoffs rather than defer them. My approach: Modernize groundwater management. Many of New Mexico's groundwater basins are overdrawn, leaving agricultural producers, municipalities, and industry with long-term uncertainty about the water they can rely on. I will invest in better mapping, data, and monitoring, adopt best sustainability practices for critically overdrawn basins, and expand stormwater capture to store rainfall. Invest in water infrastructure. Safe, reliable water infrastructure is a prerequisite for business investment and workforce growth. I will use state resources to help Tribal nations, rural towns, acequia communities, and colonias repair aging drinking-water systems and address PFAS and arsenic contamination, and I will invest in the water and wastewater infrastructure that unlocks housing and economic development in growing communities. Drought preparedness. Drought is now a near-permanent condition across much of the state. I will offer competitive grants to New Mexico farmers for modern irrigation technology, work with agricultural producers on voluntary conservation agreements, and develop a drought contingency framework so New Mexico is prepared rather than reactive. Prepare for interstate water negotiations and protect water quality. When New Mexico goes to the negotiating table on interstate compacts, we will be informed by our communities and businesses, prepared by the experts, and unified. I will enforce New Mexico's PFAS and water-pollution laws so responsible parties—including the federal government—pay to clean up the contamination they caused.

# DEB HAALAND

## **12. Government Efficiency & Accountability: What specific steps will you take to improve efficiency, accountability, and performance in state government?**

State government needs to work better—for the New Mexicans it serves, for the businesses that depend on it, and for the workers who deliver its services. I bring to this work both a commitment to good governance and a clear-eyed recognition that a hollow state government cannot be a good partner to anyone. My priorities: Rebuild the state government’s capacity to deliver. Vacancy rates at key agencies are a major obstacle to state government performance. I will fill vacant positions by streamlining hiring, raising pay for public service, removing unnecessary four-year degree requirements where practical experience can qualify, and recruiting top-tier federal talent into state service as federal workforce shifts create opportunities for New Mexico. Performance management and fair contracting. I will set clear performance metrics for every cabinet agency and report publicly on progress. Permitting times, service delivery wait times, complaint resolution, vacancy rates, and program outcomes should be visible to the public—because sunlight drives performance. Where agencies rely on private contractors, I will ensure those agencies have the authority and resources to enforce real consequences when performance standards go unmet. At the same time, fair contracting means that local New Mexico businesses have opportunities to win state contracts in their home communities without jumping through unreasonable hoops. Cut red tape. I will direct every agency to identify and eliminate unnecessary barriers in state processes—with strict timelines, transparent reporting, and clear accountability to ensure state government serves the public rather than getting bogged down in its own processes. Transparency and accountability. I will strengthen the state’s transparency infrastructure, including expanding public data on state spending, contracting, and performance, and I will fully support the Offices of the State Auditor and Attorney General in their accountability work.

## **13. Business Engagement: How will you ensure ongoing, meaningful engagement with the business community in shaping policy decisions?**

I started working in small business at fourteen, at Zinn’s Bakery in Southeast Albuquerque—where I learned that running a business means waking up early, delivering on time, and knowing your customers. Later, I ran my own small business producing and canning salsa, where I carried those same lessons with me. That experience shaped how I think about the state government’s relationship with the business community: meaningful engagement isn’t a courtesy, and it isn’t ceremonial. It’s a necessary source of operational knowledge about what works, what doesn’t, and what businesses actually need from the state. In building my policy platform, I’ve consulted widely with New Mexico business leaders and experts, and that approach will carry through my administration. My priorities: A cabinet that shows up across all 33 counties. I’ve traveled to every one of New Mexico’s 33 counties during this campaign, and my administration will carry that practice into governance. I will expect my cabinet secretaries to be present in every part of the state, meeting regularly with the businesses they regulate, local chambers, and regional economic development organizations. Business voice early in rulemaking. I will direct agencies to engage affected businesses early in rulemaking—before rules are finalized—so final rules reflect real operational knowledge and can be implemented without surprises. Small business access. Small businesses in particular often lack the staff capacity to engage with state government. The Office of Small Business I will launch on Day One will house the one-stop business intake I described earlier—serving as the true front door for small business, a single place to bring questions, raise problems, and get real answers without having to hire a lobbyist. Institutionalized partnership. Before finalizing major economic or regulatory policy, my administration will consult with the business community through roundtables and listening sessions in the communities most affected, and through regular, ongoing meetings with state business leadership to ensure the lines of communication remain open in both directions, just as my campaign has done throughout this race.

# GREGG HULL

## **1. Economic Competitiveness: What are the top three actions you would take in your first two years to improve New Mexico's competitiveness for business investment and job creation? How would you measure success?**

My first two years will focus on three priorities: using targeted incentives to recruit high-paying employers in advanced manufacturing, aerospace, defense, and energy technology; reforming occupational licensing to eliminate barriers that slow hiring and discourage relocation, helping existing businesses expand and grow employment; and creating a dedicated oversight committee to move federally funded projects from approval to completion with clear timelines and accountability. I will measure success by net new business investment, average wages in recruited sectors, reduction in time-to-licensure, and infrastructure projects delivered on time and on budget.

## **2. Tax & Fiscal Policy: What specific changes, if any, would you make to New Mexico's tax structure, including the gross receipts tax (GRT), to improve the business climate while maintaining fiscal stability? What trade-offs are you willing to make?**

The gross receipts tax creates real friction for businesses by taxing inputs and business-to-business transactions in ways that most states do not, and it deserves a serious, data-driven reform effort. As Governor, I will work with the Legislature to reduce the cascading GRT burden — especially for manufacturers, healthcare providers, and small businesses — while maintaining fiscal stability grounded in our energy revenues. I am willing to accept near-term revenue trade-offs in exchange for a more competitive, predictable tax environment, paired with gains in government efficiency so the burden is not simply shifted elsewhere.

## **3. Workforce & Education: What are your top priorities to better align New Mexico's education and workforce systems with employer needs? Which outcomes (e.g., job placement, credential attainment, wage growth) will you prioritize?**

My top priorities are expanding career and technical education in high schools — so students graduate with industry-recognized credentials and move directly into high-demand, high-wage careers — and aligning community college and university programs with real employer needs. I will also offer incentives for medical school graduates who practice in rural New Mexico. The outcomes I will hold the system accountable for are job placement rates, wages at placement, and credential attainment — not enrollment numbers.

## **4. Energy & Infrastructure: How will you balance reliability, affordability, and environmental goals in New Mexico's energy portfolio? What specific infrastructure investments (energy, water, broadband, transportation) will you prioritize?**

I will implement the Energy Transition Act responsibly, starting with an independent review of grid reliability and transmission capacity so decisions are based on engineering and data, not assumptions. Alongside the energy transition, I will prioritize expanding and modernizing the transmission grid, completing major transportation corridors, rehabilitating rural airports, extending broadband statewide, and making long-term water infrastructure investments. Reliable power and water are the first things large employers check — getting those right is economic development strategy as much as infrastructure policy.

## **5. Innovation & Emerging Industries: What targeted strategies would you implement to attract and scale high-growth industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, aerospace, AI, data centers)? How will you ensure these industries create broad economic benefits across the state?**

New Mexico has world-class research assets in Sandia, Los Alamos, and our universities, but too often that innovation creates jobs elsewhere. I will strengthen incubators, accelerators, and manufacturing hubs to keep commercialization local, and offer targeted incentives for aerospace, defense, bioscience, and energy technology sectors. I will tie incentive packages to in-state hiring commitments and workforce pipeline requirements, and ensure rural communities are included in the strategy — not treated as an afterthought.

# GREGG HULL

## **6. Healthcare Access: What specific steps will you take to improve access to affordable healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved areas, while maintaining financial sustainability of the system?**

H.B. 99 was a good start, but we have a lot of work to still do to rebuild the trust with the medical community. My approach centers on four practical actions: protecting rural hospitals and clinics by removing the financial and regulatory barriers threatening their survival; additional reforms of medical malpractice laws to stop driving doctors and specialists out of state; advocating for competitive reimbursement rates and expanded interstate medical compacts to grow the provider workforce; and launching targeted recruitment and retention programs focused on rural and underserved communities. Financial sustainability depends on getting providers into New Mexico and keeping them here — that is the foundation everything else rests on.

## **7. Regulatory Environment: What changes would you make to New Mexico's regulatory and permitting processes to improve predictability, speed, and transparency for businesses?**

I will reform occupational licensing by requiring firm timelines for decisions, establishing full reciprocity for professionals licensed in good standing in other states, and eliminating requirements that do not meaningfully protect public health or safety. On permitting and procurement, I will modernize to digital contract tracking, accelerate vendor payments, and introduce clear accountability at every stage. I will also require public transparency dashboards for major state-funded projects so businesses and communities can see in real time exactly where things stand.

## **8. Housing & Cost of Living: How will you address housing availability and affordability to support workforce growth and economic development?**

I will address housing affordability by reducing the permitting and regulatory friction that slows supply and raises costs for developers and families alike. I will work with cities, counties, and developers to streamline approvals for workforce housing in high-growth communities, and ensure that infrastructure investments in roads, water, and broadband reach areas where housing development is needed. A state serious about economic growth has to be serious about giving workers an affordable place to live.

## **9. Public Safety & Business Climate: What role do public safety and community stability play in economic development, and what actions will you take to address them?**

Crime drives businesses away and pushes families out of the state — it is an economic issue as much as a public safety one. As Governor, I will make a long-term funding commitment to bring police pay in line with neighboring states, expand grants to help communities hire and retain officers, and strengthen behavioral health services so law enforcement can stay focused on crime prevention. The record I built in Rio Rancho — where the police budget more than doubled and the city earned consistent recognition as one of the safest in New Mexico — is the model I will scale to state government.

## **10. Rural & Regional Economic Development: How will your administration support economic growth in rural and tribal communities while ensuring statewide opportunity?**

Rural and tribal communities are part of New Mexico's economic strategy, not a footnote to it. I will prioritize rural roads, airports, broadband, and water systems as the physical foundation for growth, and structure business incentive programs to reach rural and tribal communities — including the energy corridor in southeastern New Mexico. I will also ensure that CTE and apprenticeship pipelines are accessible to students and workers outside the metro areas, and engage tribal nations as genuine partners in economic development and resource planning.

# GREGG HULL

## **11. Water & Natural Resources: How will you address long-term water availability and management to support economic growth, agriculture, and community sustainability?**

My water strategy has three pillars: conservation and efficiency through infrastructure upgrades, water reuse, and modernized irrigation; new supply development through investment in brackish water treatment technology; and legal clarity through good-faith resolution of outstanding water rights disputes, including those involving Tribal nations, and meeting our downstream delivery obligations under interstate agreements. Water security is not a future problem — it is the starting point for every other economic goal we have.

## **12. Government Efficiency & Accountability: What specific steps will you take to improve efficiency, accountability, and performance in state government?**

My record in Rio Rancho — 12 consecutive GFOA budget awards and the cleanest audits in the city's history — is the standard I will bring to state government. I will modernize state procurement with digital tracking and stronger auditing and establish public dashboards so taxpayers can see in real time where money is going and whether deadlines are being met. Transparency and accountability are not just good governance values — they are economic ones.

## **13. Business Engagement: How will you ensure ongoing, meaningful engagement with the business community in shaping policy decisions?**

The business community should not have to wait for a legislative session to have its voice heard. As Governor, I will establish consistent, structured engagement with business leaders across industries and regions, and ensure that economic development leadership has real private-sector experience and is empowered to act quickly. This begins with our existing small businesses and veteran-owned businesses all the way up to Fortune 500 companies. My track record as Mayor — helping secure more than \$6 billion in business investment through direct, ongoing relationships with employers and industry groups — is exactly how I intend to govern at the state level.

# DUKE RODRIQUEZ

## **1. Economic Competitiveness: What are the top three actions you would take in your first two years to improve New Mexico's competitiveness for business investment and job creation? How would you measure success?**

- Eliminate personal income tax, eliminate gross receipts tax on retail sales, and reduce property tax. We will measure success by population growth, growth in overall job numbers, inward migration to New Mexico, and intra-state consumer spending.
- Fund construction of five desalination plants (in Eddy County, Lea County, San Juan County, Bernalillo County, and Valencia County) so businesses can access the water resources they need for expansion and job creation. We will measure success by new businesses, business expansion, and addition of manufacturing and construction jobs.
- Appoint a Superintendent of the Regulation & Licensing Department who is experienced in and passionate about economic development. Far too many private sector projects wither on the RLD vine. RLD needs to license and permit projects and people more efficiently, more transparently, and more quickly. RLD must become a driver of jobs, rather than an impediment to jobs. We will measure success by permitting and licensing timelines, the number of licensing lawsuits and appeals; and applications for new permits and licenses.

## **2. Tax & Fiscal Policy: What specific changes, if any, would you make to New Mexico's tax structure, including the gross receipts tax (GRT), to improve the business climate while maintaining fiscal stability? What trade-offs are you willing to make?**

- Eliminate personal income tax.
- Eliminate GRT on retail sales (retailer to end-user).
- Work to end GRT pyramid-ing.
- Seek cooperation from counties to reduce property tax rates on residences.
- Sweep all of the suspension funds for unspent capital outlay funds. New Mexico has billions of dollars in unspent capital outlay funds.
- End Michelle Lujan Grisham's costly, counterproductive, intrusive, and illegal "universal child care program." Instead, let working families keep more of their money by eliminating personal income tax.
- End money-sucking, duplicative, redundant programs like the state Medical Insurance Pool; community solar tax credits; and others.

## **3. Workforce & Education: What are your top priorities to better align New Mexico's education and workforce systems with employer needs? Which outcomes (e.g., job placement, credential attainment, wage growth) will you prioritize?**

- Encourage and expand gifted & talented programs in public schools so that bright students receive the attention, challenge, and connections they deserve.
- Encourage and expand vocational education, including apprenticeship programs, so that students connect with trades and manufacturing work.
- Join all interstate licensure compacts so that professionals can get to work quickly in New Mexico.
- Create apprenticeship or educational licensure categories within RLD and other licensing authorities so that businesses can more efficiently and economically train workers.
- Encourage or even require at-risk youth to participate in an after-school sports program. Identify at-risk youth and funnel them into after-school sports programs to provide a productive outlet.

# DUKE RODRIQUEZ

## **4. Energy & Infrastructure: How will you balance reliability, affordability, and environmental goals in New Mexico's energy portfolio? What specific infrastructure investments (energy, water, broadband, transportation) will you prioritize?**

- Appoint an energy czar, headquartered in Southeast New Mexico, to ensure that New Mexico earns all it can from oil and gas.
- Fund construction of five desalination plants (in Eddy County, Lea County, San Juan County, Bernalillo County, and Valencia County) so businesses can access the water resources they need for expansion and job creation. We will measure success by new businesses, business expansion, and addition of manufacturing and construction jobs.
- Create tax credits and incentives for private investment in desalination.
- End costly, inefficient expansion of rural broadband and instead pivot to services like Starlink to better provide internet access in rural areas.
- Stop the needless and counterproductive interference with PNM and New Mexico Gas Company. Encourage these businesses to make the financial moves that will benefit New Mexicans, instead of pushing radical social agendas on our utility providers.
- Direct the Department of Transportation to build a mechanism for people to report potholes or damaged roads. Then fix the roads and fill the potholes.
- Stop the needless and counterproductive interference with federal defense and military projects. Cooperate with the federal Department of Defense and Department of Energy instead of pursuing petty political spats.

## **5. Innovation & Emerging Industries: What targeted strategies would you implement to attract and scale high-growth industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, aerospace, AI, data centers)? How will you ensure these industries create broad economic benefits across the state?**

- Eliminate personal income tax.
- Fund construction of five desalination plants (in Eddy County, Lea County, San Juan County, Bernalillo County, and Valencia County) so businesses can access the water resources they need for expansion and job creation. We will measure success by new businesses, business expansion, and addition of manufacturing and construction jobs.
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- Join all interstate licensure compacts so that professionals can get to work quickly in New Mexico.
- Cooperate early and often with companies to identify beneficial projects they can do to win community backing and prevent unnecessary litigation.
- Make New Mexico the State of the Arts by highlighting, developing, and incentivizing investment in arts projects. Enact a GRT exemption for retail sales of art created by New Mexicans in New Mexico. Create a small fund for arts applications from rural areas.

## **6. Healthcare Access: What specific steps will you take to improve access to affordable healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved areas, while maintaining financial sustainability of the system?**

- Join all interstate licensure compacts so that professionals can get to work quickly in New Mexico.
- Stop spending money on abortion clinics, and redirect that money to primary care clinics.
- Bring healthcare businesses to the table (literally, the conference room on the Fourth Floor of the New Mexico Capitol) and mediate a resolution to their ongoing disputes.
- Require the Health Care Authority to actually track and publish the amount of money it pays every month to the Medicaid Managed Care Organizations.

# DUKE RODRIQUEZ

- Explore a public-private deal between UNMH and Presbyterian to ensure that Presbyterian's vast network continues to be a valuable asset for New Mexico.
- Allow licensure and credentialing of mobile clinics (meaning a clinic on wheels in an RV or similar vehicle) so that medical professionals can travel to underserved areas.
- Tighten Medicaid spending by eliminating reimbursements for non-medical items (Medicaid should not be paying for heating fuel or other items for which redundant programs exist).
- Tighten Medicaid spending by rooting out and eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse.

## **7. Regulatory Environment: What changes would you make to New Mexico's regulatory and permitting processes to improve predictability, speed, and transparency for businesses?**

- Appoint a Superintendent of the Regulation & Licensing Department who is experienced in and passionate about economic development. Far too many private sector projects wither on the RLD vine. RLD needs to license and permit projects and people more efficiently, more transparently, and more quickly. RLD must become a driver of jobs, rather than an impediment to jobs. We will measure success by permitting and licensing timelines, the number of licensing lawsuits and appeals; and applications for new permits and licenses.
- Appoint a state ombudsman for licensing and permitting issues.
- Explore modification of the state's capital outlay program, which currently results in partial funding of projects which never receive complete funding.
- Join all interstate licensure compacts so that professionals can get to work quickly in New Mexico.

## **8. Housing & Cost of Living: How will you address housing availability and affordability to support workforce growth and economic development?**

New Mexico is actually in pretty decent shape when it comes to housing availability and affordability. New Mexico has many crises, but a housing crisis is not one of them. Additionally, zoning is almost always a matter of local control. Property taxes are almost always a matter of local control. The State can support housing expansion with interest-free loans for down payments for first-time home buyers.

## **9. Public Safety & Business Climate: What role do public safety and community stability play in economic development, and what actions will you take to address them?**

To reduce crime, you must reduce poverty. When persistent poverty collides with failing or underperforming educational systems, and when individuals do not possess the tools to meaningfully participate in the economy, the result is crime. It is fairly predictable. Individuals without income, without economic opportunity, without a path out of poverty, and without ingredients for success will turn to crime.

If crime is the endpoint of these conditions, then the response cannot be limited to addressing each condition separately within the same structure that produced them. New Mexico cannot add another new "program" on top of a dysfunctional structure and expect the structure to change.

The time for coddling people who commit crimes is over. The reduction in prison populations is not a victory. New Mexico must stop being ashamed of keeping more people in prison. New Mexico must stop being ashamed of allowing police and prosecutors to do their jobs. We do not need new laws. We simply need to let police and prosecutors enforce the laws we have.

We must also appoint judges who are committed to justice and the law, rather than to radical social agendas. Too many judges see their role as an instrument of trendy social policy. Judges should serve the role of examining each criminal defendant through existing criminal statutes, rather than examining a class of defendants through a "social justice" "lens."

# DUKE RODRIQUEZ

## **10. Rural & Regional Economic Development: How will your administration support economic growth in rural and tribal communities while ensuring statewide opportunity?**

- Explore modification of the state's capital outlay program, which currently results in partial funding of projects which never receive complete funding.
- Join all interstate licensure compacts so that professionals can get to work quickly in New Mexico.
- Eliminate personal income tax.
- Eliminate GRT on retail sales (retailer to end-user).
- Direct the Department of Transportation to build a mechanism for people to report potholes or damaged roads. Then fix the roads and fill the potholes.
- Make New Mexico the State of the Arts by highlighting, developing, and incentivizing investment in arts projects. Enact a GRT exemption for retail sales of art created by New Mexicans in New Mexico. Create a small fund for arts applications from rural areas.

## **11. Water & Natural Resources: How will you address long-term water availability and management to support economic growth, agriculture, and community sustainability?**

- Fund construction of desalination plants so businesses can access the water resources they need for expansion and job creation. We will measure success by new businesses, business expansion, and addition of manufacturing and construction jobs.
- Create tax credits and incentives for private investment in desalination.
- Deploy resources to NMSU for an outreach program to educate farmers and ranchers about newer, more efficient, more economic methods.
- Direct the State Engineer to cooperate with farmers and ranchers who use less water than they are legally appropriated; current systems penalize farmers and ranchers for being efficient. Current systems counterproductively encourage farmers and ranchers to use all appropriated water under the "use it or lose it" system.
- Communicate with federal authorities to ensure information sharing so that miscommunications or missed communications do not increase wildfire risk. Reducing wildfire risk is more important than winning political points against the other party.

## **12. Government Efficiency & Accountability: What specific steps will you take to improve efficiency, accountability, and performance in state government?**

- Appoint a Superintendent of the Regulation & Licensing Department who is experienced in and passionate about economic development.
- Appoint a state ombudsman for licensing and permitting issues.
- Explore modification of the state's capital outlay program, which currently results in partial funding of projects which never receive complete funding.
- Join all interstate licensure compacts so that professionals can get to work quickly in New Mexico.
- Require the Health Care Authority to actually track and publish the amount of money it pays every month to the Medicaid Managed Care Organizations.
- Appoint a CYFD Secretary who has experience running a prosecutorial office or a court system (a former DA, a former US Attorney, or a former judge) to bring a prosecutorial, justice-focused approach to CYFD management.
- Either pay legislators OR provide them with professional staff and subject-matter experts.
- Explore lengthening legislative sessions. Support a constitutional amendment to do so.

# DUKE RODRIQUEZ

**13. Business Engagement:** How will you ensure ongoing, meaningful engagement with the business community in shaping policy decisions?

- Call them.
- Text them.
- Email them.
- Meet with them in person.
- Keep the door to the Fourth Floor conference room open. Literally.
- Recognize and reiterate that corporations are not the enemy, business is not bad, and profit is not a sin.

# DOUG TURNER

## **1. Economic Competitiveness: What are the top three actions you would take in your first two years to improve New Mexico's competitiveness for business investment and job creation? How would you measure success?**

Growing our economy is not a challenge that exists in a vacuum that depends solely on changing economic policy in New Mexico. Our economy cannot become competitive regionally unless we also provide safe communities and good schools. Without those components, our state cannot attract the business investment needed to create the good-paying jobs our people deserve. Economically, my first priority will be to cut gross receipts taxes and personal income taxes to bring us more closely in line with other states in our region. At the same time, we'll tackle education by expanding school choice, giving students the tools they need to read at grade level before passing them along, and insisting on accountability across the public schools system. We'll also work to eliminate the cashless bail system that prevents us from locking up the repeat offenders committing most of the crime in our community. Success will be measured by actual data, not anecdotal examples that don't reflect the full picture.

## **2. Tax & Fiscal Policy: What specific changes, if any, would you make to New Mexico's tax structure, including the gross receipts tax (GRT), to improve the business climate while maintaining fiscal stability? What trade-offs are you willing to make?**

I don't think we need to make trade-offs. Every New Mexican deserves to keep more of what they earn. Our high gross receipts tax makes New Mexico one of the most expensive states for small businesses to operate in, and our personal income taxes are among the highest in the region, driving people and businesses to Texas, Arizona, and Colorado. If we want to attract new businesses to our state, we must fix our tax structure. New Mexico's Gross Receipts Tax punishes businesses for doing business here. As governor, I'll phase out business-to-business GRT over five years, eliminating the hidden tax that makes New Mexico uncompetitive. We have the financial resources to protect municipalities during the transition instead of letting Santa Fe hoard it while small businesses struggle. No revenue cliff for cities. No new taxes. Just smarter use of the resources New Mexicans already own. I will also reduce personal income taxes so hardworking families keep more of what they earn. Affordability should not be a dream in New Mexico. It should be a reality.

## **3. Workforce & Education: What are your top priorities to better align New Mexico's education and workforce systems with employer needs? Which outcomes (e.g., job placement, credential attainment, wage growth) will you prioritize?**

To begin with, if we're moving kids through the education system without solid metrics, we're going to graduate more kids who don't have the skills they need. Only 43% of our third graders can read at grade level. Only 23% of fourth graders are proficient in math. That is a crisis, and it is shameful that politicians keep talking about it while nothing changes. As governor, I will expand parental choice and school competition, enforce grade level literacy standards before promotion, and hold schools accountable for outcomes, not just spending. We'll also emphasize high school programming that aligns with the needs of employers in local communities so students are prepared for the local job market while encouraging apprenticeships and making sure students are considering the most appropriate higher education options rather than pushing all students into four year programs.

## **4. Energy & Infrastructure: How will you balance reliability, affordability, and environmental goals in New Mexico's energy portfolio? What specific infrastructure investments (energy, water, broadband, transportation) will you prioritize?**

Our oil and gas industry does not just support our economy, it is our economy. In Fiscal Year 2025, the industry generated \$13 billion dollars for state and local governments, nearly half of the state's General Fund, funding \$2.4 billion dollars in education spending alone. New Mexico has become the nation's second largest oil producer, with production surpassing 2 million barrels per day in 2024, a remarkable achievement that funds

# DOUG TURNER

our schools, our roads, and our communities. Instead of supporting this vital sector, too many politicians want to regulate it out of existence. I will not let that happen. As governor, I will protect our energy industry by providing regulatory certainty and keeping New Mexico competitive so companies continue to invest and hire locally. When oil and gas succeed, New Mexico wins.

Our renewable energy industry is also a key piece of our economy and our future. I'll support smart investments in renewable infrastructure projects, whether it's wind, solar, or geothermal, that make economic sense while creating clean and affordable energy for our communities. Roads are also a critical piece of infrastructure. New Mexico has some of the worst roads in the nation — nearly half of urban roads and a third of rural roads are in poor condition, costing each driver more than \$1,000 a year in added vehicle costs. We have the revenue to fix this. As governor, I will ensure that current taxes meant to maintain roads go to roads and that we start to dig out of our \$7b infrastructure hole.

## **5. Innovation & Emerging Industries: What targeted strategies would you implement to attract and scale high-growth industries (e.g., advanced manufacturing, aerospace, AI, data centers)? How will you ensure these industries create broad economic benefits across the state?**

Our next governor must aggressively promote New Mexico's unique assets, including our scientific talent, geography, and natural resources, to corporations across the country and around the world. I would welcome any high-growth industry to expand in New Mexico, while ensuring they are thoughtfully planned to balance economic investment with sound resource management. To ensure broad benefits, I will focus on projects that clearly expand the tax base and create durable, good-paying jobs rather than those that leave taxpayers with the bill.

## **6. Healthcare Access: What specific steps will you take to improve access to affordable healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved areas, while maintaining financial sustainability of the system?**

Too many New Mexicans cannot get basic care close to home. Twenty six of New Mexico's 33 counties are rural, with residents often traveling 50 to 100 miles for basic health services. Eight of 27 rural hospitals are at risk of closure. A December 2025 survey found that 65% of New Mexico doctors are considering leaving the state, driven largely by the state's medical malpractice system, which is among the highest payout rate per capita in the country and drives insurance premiums to above the regional average. As governor, I will promote competition among providers, cut unnecessary regulations, and support the malpractice reform that passed in 2026 as a model for broader change. I will expand access to quality care in rural and underserved communities by incentivizing doctors and nurses to serve where they are needed most. I will also work to rebuild our mental health and substance abuse treatment capabilities.

## **7. Regulatory Environment: What changes would you make to New Mexico's regulatory and permitting processes to improve predictability, speed, and transparency for businesses?**

As a businessman, I know that red tape is a job killer. I will implement hands-on management to streamline permitting and improve predictability. My administration will shift from a culture of broken legacy bureaucracy to one of accountability, ensuring that the state government works at the speed of business. We'll also review all current regulations and remove any that are unnecessary, out-dated, or overly costly.

## **8. Housing & Cost of Living: How will you address housing availability and affordability to support workforce growth and economic development?**

The solution is fairly simple: we need to build more homes - both single and multi-family - and reduce the cost of building those homes. Regulations are driving much of the increase in building costs and need to be dramatically reduced so the supply of affordable housing can meet the demand that exists.

# DOUG TURNER

## **9. Public Safety & Business Climate: What role do public safety and community stability play in economic development, and what actions will you take to address them?**

They play a massive role. As I said in my first answer, we will not see the kind of economic development we need unless we improve public safety. New Mexico ranks second in the nation for violent crime, at nearly double the national rate. The state also ranks first for property crime, with a rate 56% above the national average. I have seen the reality firsthand. Walking my dogs a few weeks ago, a man on a mo-ped was shot just steps away from me. I was able to help the victim before police arrived. Thankfully he survived, but that incident reflects what too many New Mexico families face every day. There is some encouraging news. In the first half of 2025, violent crime fell 18% and property crime dropped 9% compared to the same period in 2024, proof that targeted enforcement works. But we must go further. As governor, I will reform the dangerous bail system so violent repeat offenders stay behind bars, fully support law enforcement, and connect public safety to better education and real economic opportunity. Safe communities are the foundation of everything else.

## **10. Rural & Regional Economic Development: How will your administration support economic growth in rural and tribal communities while ensuring statewide opportunity?**

It's about identifying and pursuing the right opportunities in communities big and small across the state.. I think resource development such as mineral extraction is an economic opportunity that's been blocked for too long in our rural areas. We've also been making life too difficult for our farmers and ranchers who are incredible stewards of our lands. We also need to ensure that a quality education is available for all students in rural and tribal communities so they have good career choices.

## **11. Water & Natural Resources: How will you address long-term water availability and management to support economic growth, agriculture, and community sustainability?**

There's no doubt that water is the lifeblood of New Mexico — for our families, our farmers, and our future. As we face growing demands on limited supply, we must treat water as a strategic asset and ensure compliance with and enforcement of established water treaties. Expanding and protecting our water supply begins with sound science and data-backed planning that includes assessments on the health of our aquifers, evaluates reservoir capacities, and forecasts future needs. At the same time, I will prioritize investing in modern water infrastructure, reforming water governance, and promoting responsible stewardship of our water resources across all regions of the state.

## **12. Government Efficiency & Accountability: What specific steps will you take to improve efficiency, accountability, and performance in state government?**

It's going to take hands-on leadership and management to change the culture in state government from one that discourages business growth to one that sees small businesses as customers who deserve support and guidance not punitive measures as the default posture. As a businessman who understands that small businesses are the most important economic driver in our state, I'll provide that management personally. Government must also act more like a business and focus on service to its customers – the taxpayer.

## **13. Business Engagement: How will you ensure ongoing, meaningful engagement with the business community in shaping policy decisions?**

I'm a businessman with longstanding relationships across the private sector in New Mexico. I guarantee the business community will have consistent and direct engagement with the Turner administration as we work together to ignite New Mexico.

# DOUG TURNER

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