

Q&A: Senate District 30 Clemente Sanchez

- **NAME:** Clemente Sanchez
- **POLITICAL PARTY:** Democrat
- **OCCUPATION:** Community Banker, Retired Higher Education
- **CITY OF RESIDENCE:** Grants, NM
- **RELEVANT EXPERIENCE:** State Senator for District 30 since 2013
- **EDUCATION:** BBA Eastern NM University, MBA NM Highlands University
- **CAMPAIGN WEBSITE:** www.clemente4nm.com

What steps should the Legislature take to ensure New Mexico has a balanced budget amid falling oil prices and an economic downturn prompted by the coronavirus outbreak? We will need to prioritize spending. Everything will need to be on the table including tax credits, deductions and exemptions which will each need to be evaluated and reviewed to determine their effectiveness.

What more, if anything, should the Legislature do to address a court ruling that found New Mexico is failing to provide a sufficient education to all students? I believe that what we did in the 2019 and 2020 legislative sessions we addressed and complied with the court ruling. We need to make sure the funds are now going to the students in the classroom and not to capital and administrative expenditures.

What changes, if any, should New Mexico make to its gross receipts tax code? We need to have tax reform and when we have reform everything has to be on the table including tax credits, exemptions and deductions. We need to accelerate the getting the receipts for internet sales because our store front stores are losing sales to internet sales.

Do you support or oppose legalizing recreational marijuana use in New Mexico and taxing its sales? I support the medical program and we need to ensure that the recreational sales do not hurt it and we are not there yet.

We need to make sure that law enforcement can test for impairment and we don't have that yet. And most importantly we need to keep out of our youth.

In recent years, New Mexico has steadily increased spending on early childhood programs, such as home visiting, prekindergarten and childcare assistance, and created a new early childhood trust fund. Do you support or oppose a constitutional amendment that would withdraw more money from the Land Grant Permanent Fund to increase funding for early childhood services? What is going on now with COVID-19 is a perfect example of what could happen when oil runs out. We need to review the beneficiaries and adjust accordingly and add early childhood. We have increased spending in these areas and the funds have not been spent yearly.

Do you support or oppose opening the state's primary elections to voters who aren't affiliated with either major political party? Support

Do you support or oppose repealing a long-dormant 1969 state law that outlaws abortion, except in limited circumstances? Oppose. If a mother's life is in danger then the physician and the family need to make a decision on what is best for the mother and child. The current law has exceptions now.

Would you support a merit-based evaluation system to determine how the state spends its capital outlay funding? Should each legislator be required to disclose which projects he or she funded? This will need to be evaluated because it depends what merit-based means. We need to make sure that rural communities and Native American Communities are treated equally and fairly in allocation of capital outlay. Rural communities have just as much capital needs as urban areas.

Do you support or oppose requiring lobbyists to disclose which bills they advocate for or against? Would support within reason as long as the reporting is not so cumbersome.

New Mexico is highly reliant on the oil and natural gas industries to generate revenue to fund state programs, as evidenced by recent oil boom and bust cycles. What are the things you would do to diversify the state's economy and revenue base? We need to review our regulations to make sure they are business friendly in order to incentivize industry to come to our state. We need to have tax reform and recruit industry that is other than service oriented.

Do you support or oppose updating the current prohibition in the law on assisted suicide in order to allow aid-in-dying under certain medical circumstances? I would need to review the legislation proposed. I support life but do understand the suffering the patient and the family are going through.

Would you support or oppose a moratorium on fracking? And should the state impose additional renewable energy mandates as a way to address climate change concerns? I do not support a moratorium on fracking. Our extractive industries are about 45% of the state's budget that funds our schools and government. Our mandates on the books now for renewable energy are adequate and no need to impose more.

What steps should the Legislature take to address crime and improve public safety? We need to re-evaluate the bail bond constitutional amendment that was passed. Increase funding and recruiting of law enforcement and pay a living wage and give them the resources that they need to do their job.

Do you support or oppose the practice of legislative budget-writing committees holding closed-door meetings during the crafting of state spending bills? The legislature needs to be transparent.

Personal background

- 1. Have you or your business, if you are a business owner, ever been the subject of any state or federal tax liens? NO**
- 2. Have you ever been involved in a personal or business bankruptcy proceeding? NO**
- 3. Have you ever been arrested for, charged with, or convicted of drunken driving, any misdemeanor or any felony in New Mexico or any other state? If so, explain. NO**