

# SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Santa Fe – March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### **Clerk Clark Celebrates HB4, The New Mexico Voting Rights Act, Passing**

After passing both chambers of the legislature, [HB4](#), which would expand and protect voting rights, establish an opt-in permanent absentee list, and improve several other administrative functions, passed the Senate and, with the House's concurrent approval, will likely be signed into law by Governor Lujan Grisham.

“Santa Fe County consistently sees the highest voter turnout among large counties in New Mexico.” County Clerk Katharine Clark explained, “Thousands of residents choose to vote absentee in every election for a variety of reasons, largely because it is the most accessible method for older voters and voters with disabilities. These voters currently have to request an absentee ballot in every election and often request being able to request a ballot for multiple elections. Now, they can.”

“HB4 will also add much needed voter database modernization, where a voter's data can follow them automatically. They will still be able to opt-out of automatic updates. This will allow continuous updates throughout the year rather than a deluge of updates leading up to elections. We are also glad to see that elections will be school holidays, allowing for easier use of schools as polling sites and a fair and equitable process for requesting a ballot box. Finally, we are gratified this bill has recognized the unique challenges to tribal voters. While our four pueblos have very high voter turnout in Santa Fe County, we still see postal challenges for tribal voters. This bill will hopefully break down barriers to tribal voters in New Mexico,” said Clark.

Katharine Clark would like to thank the numerous cosponsors in the legislature and county residents for their strong support for this much-needed legislation. She said, “We have strong voices here in Santa Fe, and so many voters are thrilled to finally have their voices heard on these issues.”

For more information, contact Mitchell Cox, the Voter Outreach Coordinator for the Clerk's office

Email: [mcox@santafecountynm.gov](mailto:mcox@santafecountynm.gov)

Phone: 505-992-9858

Cell: 505-479-0393