

SANTA FE COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Santa Fe County Clerk Achieves Key Election Resolutions at NACo

Santa Fe County Clerk Katharine E. Clark has successfully introduced and passed several important resolutions and a platform change at the July 2024 National Association of Counties (NACo) meeting. Recently appointed by the NACo President as Vice Chair of the Elections Subcommittee of Pensions, Finance, and Intergovernmental Affairs, Clark's initiatives address the growing complexities of election administration and emphasize the need for adequate funding and innovative solutions, particularly as we approach a presidential election year.

This year marks the first inclusion of concepts such as innovation, ADA compliance, and critical election funding in NACo's election platform. These significant changes highlight the importance of funding in the national elections platform and address the increasing operational complexities due to new legislation and rules across the country. Local election officials are facing challenges with staff retention and the need for more funding without significant administrative barriers. Clark's resolutions reflect these nationwide challenges and stress the importance of local oversight and adequate support for election operations.

Key Resolutions and Platform Change Sponsored by Clerk Katharine E. Clark:

1. **Platform Change to Election Funding:** Advocates for a consistent, predictable, and dedicated federal funding stream to assist counties in meeting federal election requirements. This platform change supports counties' ability to prepare for future technology and security updates, recruit and retain high-quality election workers, and develop innovative election practices.
2. **Local Control over Election Resource Allocation:** This resolution emphasizes the need for counties to have the flexibility to allocate election resources based on their unique needs and challenges.
3. **Recognition of Election Workforce as Critical Infrastructure:** Asserts that election officials and workers are essential to the democratic process and should be recognized and supported as critical infrastructure.
4. **Federal Workforce Funding for Election Worker Recruitment, Training, and Retention:** Advocates for federal funding dedicated to bolstering the election workforce to handle increased voter turnout and mail-in ballot complexities.
5. **Expansion of Election Funding beyond HAVA:** Calls for additional federal funding sources to support comprehensive election infrastructure improvements, including ADA compliance and enhanced broadband connectivity at polling sites.
6. **Improving Voter Database Accuracy through Data Sharing:** Proposes the creation of a secure, collaborative portal for local and state election officials to verify and update voter information, improving the accuracy of voter databases.
7. **USPS Consultation on Service Changes and Processing Center Consolidation:** Co-sponsored with District Clerk Patti Henry of Chambers County, Texas, this resolution urges the USPS to engage with counties to mitigate any negative impacts on election mail processing and other critical services. Clark played a key role in lobbying for this resolution.

“The inclusion of these key concepts into NACo's platform represents a significant step forward for local election officials nationwide,” said Clerk Katharine E. Clark. “Our elections subcommittee has been extremely active, and I extend my gratitude to my fellow committee members for their collaboration and support. The need for robust election funding and local oversight has never been more urgent, especially in a presidential election year. NACo represents counties across the country and has an important voice at the federal level. We will be reaching out directly, but we hope our lawmakers in Washington take note of our new policy priorities in elections.”

Clark's resolutions address pressing issues such as the need for a more accurate voter registration database, with local and state officials retaining control of their voter data. One proposed solution includes a secure portal to verify voter information against federal databases, such as the Social Security Administration, to ensure deceased individuals are removed from voter rolls.

These efforts ensure transparency and accuracy in election processes, thereby enhancing voter confidence and trust in the electoral system.

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