



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **New Mexico Ethics Watch Announces New Report on Oil And Gas Industry Political Influence**

At first glance, it might appear that it was a bad year for the oil and gas industry as far as elections are concerned. After all, the industry's top choice for governor, Republican Mark Ronchetti, lost to incumbent Democrat Michelle Lujan Grisham. Rochetti received nearly \$900,00 from the industry, which was about 20 percent of the total oil and gas contributions in this state last year, according to campaign finance data compiled in a new study by New Mexico Ethics Watch.

And despite oil and gas interests pouring hundreds of thousands of dollars into the campaigns of Republican legislative candidates, the GOP failed to break the Democrat's commanding hold on the state House of Representatives.

Still, it wasn't a completely bad year for the oil and gas industry here. Despite the Democrats' big majority in the House, the industry was successful in killing a bill that would have established greenhouse gas emission limits. The bill never even made it to the House floor.

In our new report, Ethics Watch documents more than \$4.5 million in direct contributions from the industry to candidates, committees, and PACs in the state during the primary and general elections last year, a record-breaking amount.

This amount may seem incredible in a small, low-income state like New Mexico, where the average annual income, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, is less than \$30,000. And the total amount that the industry spends here would increase dramatically if lobbyist compensation were included. But New Mexico does not require this disclosure, unlike many other states.

Despite the electoral failure of Ronchetti – not to mention four of the major GOP recipients of oil and gas money in the general election cycle, including incumbent Jane Poudrell-Culbert – there is no sign that the industry will be cutting back on its attempts to influence elections, legislation and public opinion in New Mexico any time soon.

“We hope that with this report on the power and influence of the oil and gas industry, as well as our previous reports on the subject in recent years, citizens and others have been educated,”

said Kathleen Sabo, executive director of New Mexico Ethics Watch. “Hopefully, citizens will know which tools will help them to follow and watchdog this influential industry in the future.”

The full report and additional resources can be found on the [NM Ethics Watch](#) website.

Download the [full report](#).

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**New Mexico Ethics Watch is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization and a principal leader in ethics reform in New Mexico. Our values are that ethics is for everyone; that good government leads to improved schools, healthier communities, and better business, and attention to ethics in public life leads to more equitable opportunities for all.**

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