



BETTER TOGETHER
NEW MEXICO

P.O. Box 95735
Albuquerque, NM 87199
(505) 235-6323

RE: Opposes **SB 218 Election Changes**

Mr./Madame Chair and Committee Members:

Better Together New Mexico (BTNM) brings together hundreds of advocacy groups and thousands of New Mexicans statewide. Our mission is to unite New Mexicans through grassroots initiatives and work to positively shape the decisions that affect our lives, families, and communities.

BTNM strongly opposes SB 218 Election Changes. SB 218 represents an unwarranted overreach into our electoral system, introducing changes that complicate and obscure the voting process. The bill's extensive modifications, including the switch in language from "registered voters" to "eligible voters" demand a level of precision in voter roll maintenance that our current system does not achieve. The New Mexico Secretary of State (NMSOS) admits that there is no way to prevent the voter info mail-outs required by SB 218 from going to immigrants who are not legally in the U.S. This could encourage those who are not legally eligible to vote to attempt to register, creating unnecessary work for the NMSOS and unnecessary risk of non-qualified voter registrations.

In addition, this bill threatens to reduce transparency by shifting critical oversight functions away from the Election Bureau without clearly defining who would assume these crucial responsibilities. Ensuring our election system remains open and accessible is paramount, and any move towards diminished public accountability undermines both voter trust and the integrity of our democratic processes.

New Mexico grappled with significant technical malfunctions in its same-day registration system during the recent general election leading many to resort to provisional ballots. Unfortunately, many of these ballots were subsequently rejected, or voters were discouraged and left the polling stations. SB 218's proposed solution, instructing the Board of Elections to issue provisional ballots based on provided addresses, does not adequately resolve the underlying problems.

Considering these significant issues, I urge you to vote NO on SB 218 to ensure our elections remain transparent and maintain their integrity.

Thank you for considering my comments,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carla J. Sonntag".

Carla J. Sonntag
President and CEO