

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2021

Contact: Matt Garcia-Sierra, m.garciasierra@nmlegis.gov

GOP Leader Townsend calls on Secretary of State and Ethics Commission to investigate possible coordinated effort to influence redistricting

Santa Fe, NM – According to a recent [report](#), the Center for Civic Policy and NAVA Education Project offered \$50 stipends to individuals to lobby New Mexico’s first independent and nonpartisan Citizen Redistricting Committee (CRC) to pass their privately funded redistricting maps. The accusations of paying to influence the CRC are seemingly backed up by emails gathered by a local ethics watchdog group, and raise concerns over transparency and influence as the state embraces the independent and nonpartisan redistricting efforts.

“I am disappointed that special interest organizations who hide their funding and expenditures, such as the Center for Civic Policy, are willing to flagrantly attempt to influence the independent Citizens Redistricting Committee,” said House Republican Leader Jim Townsend (Artesia). “I am calling on the Secretary of State and the State Ethics Commission to investigate how these activities are funded and whether there is a coordinated effort to undermine the independent and nonpartisan CRC. Too many New Mexicans, from every walk of life and across the political spectrum, rallied behind the creation of the CRC not just for fairness but to remove political influence from the redistricting process.”

Rep. Townsend continued, *“Business as usual cannot be tolerated in redistricting. The people made their voice clear about removing influence from the redistricting process. The rejection of those who use political influence to change political districts has been immediate and forceful, especially so in [media reports](#) when the bill was moving through the legislative process. New Mexicans are tired of the dark-money influences that back the powerful in the Roundhouse, and have demanded that money and politics be blocked from influencing the independence of the CRC.”*

Rep. Townsend concluded, *“It goes without saying that House Republicans have extreme confidence in the independence of the CRC. The committee has done a tremendous job traveling the state to better understand what our communities needs are in the redistricting process. I am hopeful that the Secretary of State and the State Ethics Commission will provide a thorough investigation to bolster the independence and nonpartisan standing of the Citizens Redistricting Committee.”*

The CRC will meet on Friday, October 17, 2021 to discuss their final map selections.

###