**The Myth of the Benefit of the Two-Party System**

So many myths about the two-party system and so little time to debunk them. But let’s try because every election we keep doing the same thing and we get the same outcome-members from two warring factions who can’t solve New Mexico’s problems.

**Myth #1:**  People are apathetic and that is why they don’t vote. WRONG. People are rational creatures and rightly have surmised that their vote does not matter lately because the elections are rigged. How? Most politicians are elected with little to no competition. New Mexico has the greatest number of “free riders” of any state-incumbents with no general election opposition. This year, for example, [34 districts](http://unitenm.us/run) will be uncontested by one of the two major parties. If a voter has no choice, why should they bother to vote?

Myth #2: If we could only elect more of us and less of them, everything would be great. WRONG. We live in a diverse state and a diverse country. This idea that the other side is wrong, evil, pig-headed, stupid or whatever is what has gotten us into this mess. When you talk to the “others” you will find you agree on 80 percent of the important issues. We need an election system that allows politicians to find that common ground, that forces them to talk with all voters of every stripe and rewards voters for showing up by giving them a system full of elected officials that work together and problem solve. Open primaries, ranked choice voting, non-partisan redistricting commissions, free and fair ballot access for independent candidates and other political reforms must be passed in New Mexico so we stop fighting with each other and start working together. We should be in last place no more.

Myth #3: We can’t change the system. WRONG. We control the system, but if behave in a crazy way by voting for the same people and the same parties over and over again, then truly nothing will change. We change the system by supporting credible, thoughtful candidates who are committed to the people and not the political parties. 25 percent of New Mexicans do not belong to a major political party. 45 percent of Americans don’t. 60 percent of millenials are registering as independents. In short, we have the troops and need to start a non-violent revolution!

Myth #4: We can’t elect a non-partisan, independent candidate to office in New Mexico. WRONG. We just launched [Unite New Mexico](http://unitenm.us) and we already have two independent candidates for the State House that stand a great chance of winning this November. Other independent or “declined-to-state” voters have until the end of June to file for offices up and down the ballot for the election this November. Competition is the cornerstone of our economy because it ensures choice. So, why do we put up with no or little choice at the ballot box? If independent candidates run against every incumbent who had a free ride in the general election this November and in 2020, it would change the face of politics in New Mexico, but most importantly, it would increase voter turnout because people show up when there are choices.

Unite New Mexico aims to represent non-partisan, non-aligned, independent voters and candidates in New Mexico. Our candidates, if elected, will advocate for all people in the state legislature. Unite New Mexico exists to level the playing field for independents who want to run for office. And, together, we will set an example of civil discourse in politics because the enemy is not the other party or those with no party. The enemy is apathy and frustration that lead to the insanity of doing the same thing, the same way and continually hoping the outcome is different. We are offering a different way. Join us for the launch of Unite New Mexico in Santa Fe and Albuquerque on May 24. See our [website](http://unitenm.us) for details.

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