

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 2, 2018

Contact: Joey Keefe (505) 469-2783

Secretary of State Toulouse Oliver and Representative Thomson Push to Require Mandatory Sexual Harassment Training for Lobbyists

SANTA FE – Working with New Mexico Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver, State Representative Elizabeth “Liz” Thomson has introduced [House Bill 313, Annual Lobbyist Harassment Training](#), which is also co-sponsored by Representative Jim Dines and Representative Angelica Rubio. The bill would require all New Mexico lobbyists to participate in annual training to prevent sexual harassment before being allowed to work during a legislative session, and would provide a process for any person to file complaints with the Office of the Secretary of State if they are sexually harassed by a lobbyist. Registered lobbyists are not currently required to participate in any workplace discrimination training as a condition of working at the Roundhouse.

“Regular sexual harassment training will go a long way to ensure registered lobbyists clearly understand what behavior is never acceptable in the workplace, as well as to ensure lobbyists have the training and tools they need to keep themselves and others safe from harassment,” said Secretary Toulouse Oliver. “I thank Representative Thomson for working on this legislation and I know she’ll keep pushing with me to make the Roundhouse a safer place for everyone who enters it.”

“Sexual harassment has no place in society much less in our state capitol building,” said Representative Thomson. “I am glad Secretary of State Toulouse Oliver took the lead on confronting sexual harassment in the Roundhouse by making voluntary trainings available for lobbyists. We both recognize that the logical next step is to make these trainings mandatory.”

If the bill becomes law, lobbyists would be required to take at least three hours of sexual harassment prevention training during the twelve months prior to each legislative session. As currently drafted in the bill, acceptable trainings must be either sponsored by the Secretary of State or the lobbyist’s employer, or must be conducted by a certified human resources professional. The bill would also establish the Secretary of State as the appropriate official for any person to report allegations of sexual harassment by a lobbyist. Under the bill, the Secretary of State would then have the authority to call for an impartial investigation. Reports of sexual harassment on other individuals, including legislators, would continue to be reported pursuant to the new policy adopted this year by the legislature.

As an initial step to combat sexual harassment in the Roundhouse, Secretary Toulouse Oliver first announced in November that she would offer voluntary sexual harassment

training for lobbyists prior to each legislative session. Two trainings were held last month and 112 registered lobbyists attended.

Additionally, Secretary Toulouse Oliver asked lobbyists for the first time to disclose on their 2018 registration forms if they have existing sexual harassment policies in place and whether they have received any sexual harassment training in the last twelve months. The responses from registered lobbyists, [have been displayed in a searchable format on the Secretary of State's website](#).

Secretary Toulouse Oliver has also provided all lobbyists with [draft sexual harassment policies and background information on how to recognize and prevent harassment](#). The draft policies are intended to help lobbyists establish sexual harassment policies in their own offices or to improve upon existing policies.

#

Follow Secretary Toulouse Oliver on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).