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SOS Toulouse Oliver Takes Lead on Election Security Issues at NASS Winter Conference

SANTA FE – Over the weekend, the New Mexico Secretary of State participated in the National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) Winter Conference held in Washington, D.C. While in Washington, Secretary Toulouse Oliver received a classified briefing from U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and other intelligence officials on Russia’s efforts to meddle in the 2016 Presidential Election. The briefing was Secretary Toulouse Oliver’s first opportunity to view classified data collected by the federal government regarding Russian interference.

“The federal government must continue collaborating with state and local election officials in order to combat future attacks on our elections,” said Secretary Toulouse Oliver. “Friday’s briefing was a good start and I’m hopeful this communication will continue.”

In addition to the classified briefing, Secretary Toulouse Oliver attended a meeting of the Elections Government Sector Coordinating Council (GCC) on Thursday. As one of eight Secretaries of State on the GCC, Secretary Toulouse Oliver is working toward increasing communication between states and the federal government on issues like cyber threats and improving the overall security of local voting systems.

On Saturday, Secretary Toulouse Oliver led a meeting of the NASS Elections Committee in her role as the committee’s co-chair. The meeting provided an opportunity for Secretaries of State from across the country to discuss the potential role of the National Guard in assisting with election cybersecurity and crisis management, as well as a review and discussion of the Secure Elections Act, a federal bill that would provide resources to states for election security.

On Sunday, Secretary Toulouse Oliver participated on a panel on risk-limiting audits with Colorado Secretary of State Wayne Williams. Secretary Toulouse Oliver discussed the risk-based audits conducted in New Mexico after each general election and offered advice and best practices for other election officials in attendance wishing to conduct audits in their states or to improve upon their current audit practices.

The NASS 2018 Summer Conference will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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