



Timothy Keller
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State of New Mexico
OFFICE OF THE STATE AUDITOR
Elected for Better Government

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Auditor Keller Announces Legislative Agenda
Focuses Efforts on Enhancing Government Accountability

SANTA FE, NM – Today, State Auditor Tim Keller rolled out his agenda for the 2015 Legislative Session. The three-part plan is aimed at: (1) exercising the Auditor Office’s capacity to provide financial oversight over the use of public funds; (2) advocating for legislation that would enhance government accountability; and (3) weighing in on legislation that impacts the use of taxpayer dollars, including initiatives on education and healthcare.

“This session, my office will be engaging throughout the legislative process to support initiatives that protect taxpayer dollars, crackdown on corruption and foster better decision making. It’s all about watching out for our tax dollars, that they are spent wisely and that they get to where they are supposed to go,” Keller stated.

Key components of Keller’s legislative agenda are as follows:

- 1) *Address the state’s ongoing inability to balance its checkbook.* Since 2007, the state has consistently been unable to account for its spending. As a result the state may have to write down between \$70- \$460 million to balance the books. As a basic tenet of good government, the Office will seek to bring transparency and accountability in order to help bring about a proper solution to this issue.
- 2) *Advocate for legislation that would enhance government accountability.* Auditor Keller is working with Democratic and Republican sponsors in both chambers on legislation to:
 - Prevent conflicts of interest on boards and commissions;
 - Audit capital outlay projects over \$5 million to ensure that taxpayer dollars are used properly;
 - Audit teacher evaluations, merit pay and the A-F school ratings to improve the quality and consistency of these policies;
 - Modify the health care exemption to the procurement code to close the loophole that allows the procurement process to be bypassed; and
 - Provide for periodic reversion of special funds to the general fund, putting money on the sidelines that is not being used back to work for New Mexicans.
- 3) *Weigh in on legislation that impacts the use of taxpayer dollars:* The Office of the State Auditor will engage with respect to legislation affecting education, healthcare, and other important areas to ensure taxpayer funds are being used appropriately.

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