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SOS Toulouse Oliver Announces Voluntary Sexual Harassment Training for Lobbyists

SANTA FE – In light of recent widespread media coverage of sexual harassment and misconduct in legislatures across the nation, New Mexico Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver has announced a plan to include an option for lobbyists to voluntarily sign up for and receive sexual harassment training prior to each legislative session.

“Sexual harassment in any form is never acceptable,” said Secretary of State Toulouse Oliver. “This is just a first step, but it is my hope that by giving lobbyists the opportunity to enroll in sexual harassment training programs, we will be able to prevent some instances of misconduct from happening in the first place.”

The current lobbyist registration form will be amended to include a checkbox confirming that the lobbyist has received the provided sexual harassment training. The forms will be posted on the Secretary of State’s Office’s website and will be searchable by name so members of the public will know which lobbyists have taken advantage of the training.

Secretary of State Toulouse Oliver said she will ask state legislators to encourage lobbyists to enroll in training, and will begin pushing for legislation that gives the Secretary of State’s Office the authority to require sexual harassment training for lobbyists when they register with her office. She is working in tandem with counterparts in the legislative branch to ensure the same type of training is offered to state legislators. Toulouse Oliver also said her office is reviewing options to train Secretary of State’s Office employees who have not yet completed sexual harassment training since the state of New Mexico last provided trainings in 2015.

“The good news is we have seen that victims of sexual harassment are finally feeling empowered to speak up and confront their attackers,” said Secretary of State Toulouse Oliver. “It’s time we take additional steps here in New Mexico to battle systemic sexual harassment so all residents will feel safer.”

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