

Joshua James Lawrence's answers to the Duke City Ledger

Emailed to the Ledger on Oct. 20, 2026, by Joshua James Lawrence, Republican candidate for New Mexico State Auditor, in reply to questions the Ledger sent him on Oct. 15. The Ledger's questions are in bold; his answers follow exactly as sent. Nothing was removed.

Here are the answers to your questions. If you have any questions please let me know or view my website www.joshuajames4nm.com

1. In this office, what would you do about audits of local governments' deals, such as data-center tax breaks and surveillance-camera contracts?

I would conduct risk-based audits examining contract transparency, fiscal responsibility, conflicts of interest, and measurable public benefits, ensuring taxpayer dollars are protected and local governments remain accountable.

2. In this office, what would you do about protecting whistleblowers?

I would establish confidential reporting channels, protect whistleblower identities, investigate allegations impartially, and enforce safeguards against retaliation, ensuring employees can expose misconduct without fear.

3. What's one thing about this office most voters don't know, but should?

One thing voters should understand is that the State Auditor is not simply responsible for reviewing financial records. This office can play a critical role in identifying waste, exposing mismanagement, and ensuring public funds are used for their intended purposes. Audits should be proactive, risk based, and driven by evidence, not political pressure. Taxpayers deserve transparency, and government agencies should be able to demonstrate accountability for every dollar they spend. The office must also communicate its findings clearly so the public understands what went wrong, what needs to change, and whether corrective action was taken. Accountability means more than publishing a report. It means following the evidence, identifying weaknesses, and making recommendations that help prevent the same problems from happening again. The public deserves an Auditor who understands that public money belongs to taxpayers, not government bureaucracies.

4. Who are your largest donors, and is there any decision this office makes where you'd step aside because of them?

My position is that campaign contributions must never purchase access, influence, or preferential treatment. I believe financial transparency is essential to maintaining public trust, and voters deserve to know who funds a campaign. I would support full compliance

with applicable campaign finance disclosure laws and expect my campaign to operate with integrity. As State Auditor, my responsibility would be to the people of New Mexico, regardless of a donor's wealth, political affiliation, business interests, or personal connections. If an audit or investigation involved a significant donor, a business associate, or another person with whom I had a financial or personal relationship, I would disclose the potential conflict and follow applicable ethics laws and procedures. Where necessary, I would seek independent ethics guidance or recuse myself to protect the integrity of the process. No donor should receive special treatment, and no taxpayer should have to wonder whether an audit was influenced by campaign money.

Thank you,
Joshua