

On the ballot: Four general obligation bond acts

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This election, four bond requests would pay for improvement of senior citizen facilities (A); library resource acquisition bonds (B); higher, special and tribal education bonds (C); and public safety capital improvement bonds (D).

General obligation bonds are voter-approved debts for money borrowed by the state to finance capital improvement projects. The state is required to pay the loans back with interest. Voting for it authorizes the issuance and sale of the bonds for the reasons above, and to “provide for a property tax levy for payment of principal, interest and certain costs related to the bonds,” according to the New Mexico Legislature. The bottom line is bonds don’t result in an increase of taxes.

Bond A: Senior citizen facility improvement. This question asks for a vote “for” or “against” the state’s request to authorize it to issue and sell off obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$15,440,000, for approving the issuance and sale of senior citizen facility improvement, construction and equipment acquisition bonds.

In Taos County, the projects that would benefit include \$92,850 to improve the Picuris Pueblo senior center for code compliance issues; \$1,275,000 for a new senior center in Taos, including a proposal to plan, design, construct and purchase equipment for it; and \$129,150 to buy equipment and vehicles, including a meal delivery vehicle for senior centers in Taos.

Bond B : Library acquisition bonds. This bond question is for library acquisitions statewide for public libraries, public school libraries, academic libraries and tribal libraries. It requests voters to vote “for” or “against” the issuance and sale of library acquisition bonds. A “for” vote authorizes the state to “issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$10,167,000.

About \$3 million would go toward equipment, infrastructure and resources to non-tribal public libraries statewide; \$750,000 would go toward the same, but at tribal libraries; \$3,250,000 would go toward academic libraries statewide; and \$3 million would go toward public school libraries.

Bond C: The higher education bond “is about supporting our community by ensuring that students have the tools and facilities they need to be successful,” says “Go Bond C,” a higher education initiative in favor of the bond. Voters are asked to approve bond money for capital improvements at institutions of higher education, special schools and tribal schools bonds.

The question will ask for a vote of “for” or “against.” “Shall the state be authorized to issue general obligation bonds in an amount not to exceed \$142,356,000 to make capital expenditures for certain higher education, special schools and tribal schools?” The bond would provide funding for educational institutions statewide.

The University of New Mexico and New Mexico Higher Education encourages New Mexicans to vote in favor of the bond, “to make a big impact on thousands of students.”

In Taos County, the bonds would include \$4 million for site improvements and to “plan, design, construct, expand, furnish and equip a career technical center at the Taos branch campus of the University of New Mexico...” according to officials.

Bond D : Public safety capital improvement and acquisition bonds. This question asks voters to vote “for” or “against” \$18,196,000 in general obligation bonds for state police, public safety communications and statewide national guard facilities improvements and acquisitions. The money would be distributed as follows: Department of Public Safety, \$7 million toward a new state crime lab and expanding the existing lab in Santa Fe; Department of Information Technology, \$5 million for modernizing public safety communications statewide; Department of Military Affairs, \$4 million toward the Las Cruces National Guard center in Dona Ana County; and \$2 million to the Department of Military Affairs to improve energy efficiency in staging areas facilities across the state.

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