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NEW MEXICO

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September 1, 2011

For Immediate Release  
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**Citizen Panel Studies**  
**The Electoral College and the National Popular Vote**  
**The Center for the Study of Voting, Elections and Democracy (C-SVED)**  
**Citizen Panel tackles the tough issues at its first meeting.**  
**Ready for round 2 on September 28<sup>th</sup> in Santa Fe.**

ALBUQUERQUE, NM—Over 20 New Mexico election leaders, including County Clerks, representatives of the New Mexico Secretary of State, Legislators, business people, students, and community activists met as a “Citizen Panel” for a spirited three hour discussion on the critical issue of how America selects its President and what to make of the national popular vote movement, which has quietly amassed 49% of the electoral votes it needs to change the method of electing Presidents.

The Citizen Panel received a history lesson on how the Electoral College was formed, how the Constitution deals with it, and how states have changed the way we elect our President since the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1787.

The Citizen Panel grappled with the legal framework currently in place to elect the President, which includes no federal Constitutional right of the citizens to vote for the President, and which has throughout our history resulted in four occasions when the presidential candidate who won the popular vote lost the presidency due to a quirk in the way the Electoral College operates.

In its next two sessions, in Santa Fe on September 28, from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM and in Las Cruces on October 13, from 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM, the Citizen Panel will take on key issues like the principle of “one person/one vote”, what the economic and political impacts are of the current system on the shrinking number of swing states and especially New Mexico, the role of federalism, and whether we currently have an election system that reflects the will

of the people. “This is not a partisan issue” said Professor Lonna Atkeson, Director of C-SVED. “Both parties have benefited from the current system and both have suffered. I hope we can come together - Republicans and Democrats alike – to evaluate the Electoral College in the context of what is best for democracy, representation, and for the individual voter.”

After the conclusion of its 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting, the Citizen Panel, with the assistance of UNM C-SVED, will prepare a summary of its efforts and present it to the New Mexico Secretary of State, who is charged under House Memorial 56 with reviewing the Electoral College and the national popular vote and to report her findings to the New Mexico Legislature. The Citizen Panel Report will be available to the public and the media.

The media and the public are encouraged to attend the meetings.

Direct any questions to Professor Lonna Atkeson (phone: (505)-660-8976, email: [atkeson@unm.edu](mailto:atkeson@unm.edu)).