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SPPI Calls on NMFOG to Address Albuquerque's Transparency Failures

ALBUQUERQUE, NM—The Southwest Public Policy Institute (SPPI) has formally sent a [letter](#) to the [New Mexico Foundation for Open Government](#) (NMFOG), urging the organization to take action against the City of Albuquerque and City Clerk Ethan Watson for repeated violations of New Mexico's Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA). The letter highlights systemic government transparency and accountability failures that cost Albuquerque taxpayers millions of dollars.

"The City of Albuquerque, under the leadership of City Clerk Ethan Watson, has consistently obstructed lawful public records requests and violated the public's right to know," said Patrick M. Brenner, President of SPPI. **"This behavior is unacceptable, antithetical to the principles of democracy, and must be addressed. NMFOG's leadership is critical in holding the City accountable and restoring transparency."**

The letter references SPPI's two lawsuits against the [City of Albuquerque](#) and [Mr. Watson](#), both of which were filed due to the City's refusal to comply with IPRA. It also cites a recent [City Desk ABQ investigation](#) that revealed Albuquerque has paid over \$1.4 million in IPRA-related lawsuit settlements over the past 18 months. These figures expose a pattern of non-compliance and costly mismanagement that burdens taxpayers.

Particularly concerning is Ethan Watson's previous recognition as a Dixon Award recipient, an honor NMFOG presented for advancing open government. SPPI asserts that Mr. Watson's current approach to public records starkly contrasts the values that earned him this distinction.

In the letter, SPPI calls on NMFOG to publicly hold the City of Albuquerque and Mr. Watson accountable for their failures to comply with IPRA and to advocate for meaningful reforms that ensure transparency and government accountability.

"We have reached out to NMFOG before but have seen no significant action taken to address these glaring violations," said Brenner. **"It is time for bold leadership to step in, clear the fog, and ensure that our government serves its citizens honestly and transparently."**

SPPI remains committed to protecting the public's right to access information and will continue to pursue legal and advocacy efforts to hold government entities accountable.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Liam Gray at 505-386-1139 or press@southwestpolicy.com.

About Southwest Public Policy Institute:

The [Southwest Public Policy Institute](#) is a nonprofit think tank dedicated to improving the quality of life in the American Southwest through sound public policy solutions, transparency, and government accountability.

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