Vote for Johnson sends powerful message to D.C.

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In light of recent revelations regarding Donald Trump's past, many New Mexicans are looking for an alternative to supporting the Republican nominee for president.

As much as Hillary Clinton is attempting to seize on this trend, the fact is that for any voter who prioritizes fiscal discipline, limited government, civil liberties and a less hawkish foreign policy, she is not it.

For these New Mexico voters, there is only one rational choice for president in 2016: former Gov. Gary Johnson.

Unlike other third-party candidates for president, Johnson is on the ballot in all 50 states. He polls especially well in Western states, parts of New England, Virginia, and pulls about evenly from both the Democratic and Republican nominees.

He may not be capable of winning – the overwhelming odds are that no matter what, Hillary Clinton will be our next president – but if voters support him, it will accomplish two things.

First, they will have cast their ballots in good conscience for a candidate they do not actively mistrust and dislike.

Second, they will – by refusing to support either of the deeply flawed candidates put forward by the major parties – be sending both the Democratic and Republican establishments in Washington, D.C., a clear message: We will not be taken for granted, you have to work to earn our votes, and never again must you believe it is acceptable to nominate such abjectly awful individuals for the most powerful and important job in the entire world.

Johnson is not perfect, and we recognize that.

However, he earned excellent ratings from the fiscally conservative CATO Institute for his governance of New Mexico in every year he was assessed, consistently outranking the majority of all 50 governors in the nation.

Unlike Clinton and Trump, Johnson does not believe that America is made safer by conducting mass surveillance on hundreds of millions of ordinary Americans, including you and me, and he would not do it as president.

Unlike Clinton and Trump, Johnson has never operated on the naive presumption that if the U.S. plays nice with Vladimir Putin's regime, American foreign policy goals or world peace will be furthered.

Johnson is the only candidate who supports a broad range of criminal justice reforms, including with regard to flawed drug laws, and is the most long-standing supporter of government recognizing same-sex marriages of all three of the candidates.

Ironically, too, while Johnson is pro-choice, he actually holds the most explicitly pro-life position of all three of the candidates, opposing late-term abortions just like most Americans do.

Johnson never raised taxes as governor – not once – and exercised his veto power repeatedly to quash ill-conceived schemes that would cost taxpayers dearly while delivering up dubious value.

Unlike our leaders in Washington, D.C., Johnson balanced the budget every year he was in office – something Clinton and Trump have shown no capacity for doing.

The independent, fiscal responsibility group the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget says Clinton would increase the deficit by $200 billion over 10 years, adding to our actual, national debt, and costing you and me more money. The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget says Trump would increase the deficit by a full $5.3 trillion over 10 years – a massive debt load to be added to our existing $19 trillion debt, which is already costing us.

These are not sane or sound proposals, and they do not come from serious people.

The sad truth is that in 2016, the reigning party bigwigs in our nation's capital ignored what so many voters across the country wanted. They nominated unacceptable, unsupportable people, in defiance of public opinion and common sense.

But New Mexico voters should not stay home on Election Day, or pick between these two terrible choices. They should, instead, cast a vote they can feel good about and send a message: Support Gov. Gary Johnson, and tell the elites "never again."