



October 28, 2024

To Whom it Concern,

I am writing as the Executive Director of the Renewable Energy Industries Association of New Mexico (REIA-NM) <https://reia-nm.org/>. We have over 60 diverse members and our mission is to support, promote and advance the transition to renewable energy in New Mexico. We have been active since 2004.

It is being predicted that this October will be hottest October ever in New Mexico. Climate change is happening before our eyes.

The federal government is doing their part to with the passage of the Inflation Reduction act that directs \$365 billion over a 10 year period to address climate change. The state of New Mexico has also done their part with the passage of the Energy Transition Act that requires major utilities to have carbon neutral electrical generation by 2045 and 80% renewable generation by 2040. Additionally, the state has provided incentives to encourage homeowners and businesses to install solar.

However, more needs to be done and we all need to do our part, including supporting appropriate large scale solar + storage projects. While REIA-NM does not specifically endorse this project, we believe that as we add more wind and solar (variable generation) that it will be imperative to couple these projects with energy storage. This will enable the storage of energy when the grid does not need it and the dispatch of energy when it is needed. Currently the most cost-effective energy storage for projects of this type is lithium-ion battery technology.

Large scale solar + storage projects have positive economic benefits to the communities they reside in. In addition to trade jobs during construction and the use of local food and lodging establishments, long term tax revenue is also realized by these communities.

While I am aware that there are some safety concerns with lithium-ion batteries, the present technology has been shown to be very safe. There are rigorous national and international standards <https://www.nfpa.org/education-and-research/electrical/energy-storage-systems> that are followed for the installation of these systems. Additionally, the permitting process at Sandoval County and the interconnection application process by PNM are other points in the process that help to ensure a safe and proper installation. Furthermore, projects of this size go through extensive scrutiny by companies that finance and insure them.

In closing I would like say if we wait for perfection, it will be a long wait and meanwhile the climate clock keeps on ticking. Projects of the type help us to do our part to address climate change. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JD", is written over the typed name.

Jim DesJardins

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