



U.S. Representative
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New Mexico - 3rd District

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Date: 4/1/08

Remarks: Westwide Energy Corridor - Placitas

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TOM UDALL

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March 24, 2008

The Honorable Raul M. Grijalva
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests,
and Public Lands
Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Grijalva,

As you are no doubt aware, Section 368 of EPACT '05 required the designation of corridors, known as "West-wide Energy Corridors," across public lands in the Western United States, which will contain oil and gas pipelines, electricity transmission lines, compressor stations, hydrogen pipelines, and other energy infrastructure. A programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) was completed for corridors in 11 states and was released to the public in November 2007. Concerns about the PEIS have been raised to me by many constituents from around the congressional district I represent, and I write today to respectfully request your subcommittee hold a hearing on this issue of critical importance to both of our states, as well as to the entire Western U.S.

There is little question that greater transmission capacity for renewable energy developers, electricity, and other types of energy are needed. However, as has been expressed to me with regard to the West-wide Energy Corridors, there are a number of concerns about the work conducted on the PEIS by the federal agencies responsible. Specifically, concerns in New Mexico have been raised that supplemental work must be done on the PEIS to assure compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Also, New Mexico's renewable energy resources are not adequately considered in the proposed corridors, and the cumulative impacts on environmentally sensitive areas have not been fully analyzed.

These are only a few of the several concerns that have been raised to me regarding the West-wide Energy Corridors. I believe a hearing in your subcommittee would provide much-needed information on the process to date, future plans, as well as an opportunity for Members of Congress from affected states to voice concerns heard from their constituents.

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Thank you for your consideration of my request. I look forward to continue working with you on this and other issues of great importance to our nation.

Sincerely,

Tom Udall
Member of Congress