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## In support of the Rancho Viejo Solar project

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From Mary Ellen Gonzales <maryellengonzales@gmail.com>

Date Mon 7/7/2025 8:44 PM

To Public Comments AES/BESS Permit Hearing <publiccomment@santafecountynm.gov>

### Warning:

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I support local renewable energy and economic development that will result from the Rancho Viejo Solar+BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) project because:

- We need lots of new renewable energy to meet our goals and replace capacity lost from shutting down coal plants
- Solar+BESS is the lowest cost type of "new" power generation plant that we can build in NNM that is "shovel ready" with mature technology and a great safety record. BESS is required to be co-located with Utility-size Solar to prevent overloading power lines during the day, and to enable distribution of Solar energy all night long.
- Solar+BESS close to loads served results in lower cost to consumers. Energy coming from "far away" is more expensive with energy lost in transmission, and less reliable in areas where power lines through forests may need to be de-energized during windstorms to prevent fires. The Rancho Viejo Solar location is pretty much perfect being situated in a low fire, low fuel risk area on the fringe of Communities served.
- LOCAL Solar+BESS energy sold to PNM will provide long-term fixed cost energy for 30 years
- In addition to safe, reliable Solar energy 24/7, Santa Fe County would enjoy economic benefits from 200+ construction jobs, and millions of new dollars in tax revenue to fund our local roads and schools
- ZERO emissions of CO2, methane, sulfur, mercury, or radioactivity during operation
- almost-ZERO water use, just about 4 homes worth to clean Solar while supplying power to 37,000 homes

I reject NIMBY disinformation and baseless fears and concerns spread by the "astro-turf" opponents to the Rancho Viejo Solar project like the "Clean Energy Coalition". I have done my homework, and have learned that:

- ZERO fires have EVER spread from a Utility scale BESS facility to damage public/private property in the US according to the EPRI database
- The risk of fire occurring at a modern (post-2022 design with BESS container systems certified

safe by UL-9540, sited per NFPA-855 guidelines, and built following current NEC Codes for stationary battery storage) "containerized" BESS facility is lower than from lightning, campfires, car fires, house fire, fireworks, etc. In fact, per the EPRI database, there have been only 7 modern BESS container facility fires in the last 5 years in the US, and

- NONE have spread to more than one container at a facility, and
- NONE have resulted in deaths

- modern BESS containers have ZERO "bad" PFAS inside them, (only EPA approved fire suppressants) and have not been linked to any toxic/hazardous contamination of air, ground, or water during or after a fire per any available Federal, State, or County reports

Respectfully,  
Mary Ellen Gonzales  
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May you walk in Beauty, Peace, and Wellness  
Mary Ellen