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**Fw: Support for the Rancho Viejo Solar Project**

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**From** Hank Hughes <hhughes@santafecountynm.gov>

**Date** Wed 6/11/2025 12:38 PM

**To** Dominic J. Sisneros <djsisneros@santafecountynm.gov>; Gabriel C. Bustos <gcbustos@santafecountynm.gov>

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**From:** T. Justin Garoutte <tgarout1@jhu.edu>

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 11, 2025 12:15:37 PM

**To:** Hank Hughes <hhughes@santafecountynm.gov>

**Cc:** Gabriel C. Bustos <gcbustos@santafecountynm.gov>

**Subject:** Support for the Rancho Viejo Solar Project

**Warning:**

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Dear Commissioner Hughes,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Justin Garoutte, and I am your constituent with a background in public health. We recently met at Violet Crown for the screening of The Milagro Beanfield War. I'm writing to respectfully urge you to support the proposed Rancho Viejo Solar Project currently under consideration.

As you know, Santa Fe County has taken meaningful steps to address climate change and promote sustainability, and I greatly appreciate your commitment to these values. The Rancho Viejo Solar Project represents a crucial opportunity to further those goals by expanding our local capacity for clean, renewable energy. By increasing our reliance on solar power, we take tangible steps toward electrifying our infrastructure and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels—actions that are urgently needed to curb greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the worst impacts of climate change.

From a public health perspective, the transition to clean energy is not only a climate imperative but a human health one as well. Burning fossil fuels contributes to respiratory illnesses, cardiovascular disease, and a host of other chronic conditions that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. By investing in solar energy, we reduce pollution and create a healthier environment for everyone in our community—especially our children and elderly residents.

I understand that any large-scale project raises questions and concerns, and I support a thoughtful, community-informed process. But I strongly believe that rejecting solar development sends the wrong message at a time when bold climate leadership is needed more than ever.

Commissioner Hughes, I know you care deeply about equity, sustainability, and the wellbeing of our

county's residents. Supporting the Rancho Viejo Solar Project aligns with these values and helps move Santa Fe County toward a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient future. I respectfully ask that you vote in favor of this project.

Thank you for your time, service, and leadership.

Warm regards,

Justin Garoutte, MPH, CPH  
Doctor of Public Health Candidate  
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