

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 13, 2012

The Honorable Ken Salazar, Secretary  
Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington DC 20240

Dear Secretary Salazar:

We write to express our support for your Department's continued, thorough, and timely review of the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) to permit up-to-two high-voltage transmission lines in southern and central portions of New Mexico. The SunZia project will enable New Mexico to continue our strong heritage of supplying the Nation with vital energy resources while also strengthening our region's critical electricity infrastructure.

We encourage timely completion of BLM's Draft EIS public review period that is set to conclude August 22. The project's cooperation with several requests to extend the public scoping period strengthened the quality of the Draft EIS, enabled the Department of Defense to determine SunZia's compatibility with military mission, and extended BLM's required 45-day review period to a full year.

SunZia is the key to unlocking New Mexico's very high-capacity wind, solar, geothermal and natural-gas resources to generate electricity. New Mexico State University estimates the project will create thousands of good jobs during the construction and operation of the project. Additionally, SunZia will enable thousands more jobs by attracting electricity generators to New Mexico. New development of renewable and natural-gas plants enabled by SunZia will contribute millions of new property tax dollars to depleted county treasuries.

The SunZia project is a market-driven project that would create needed jobs and revenues, create new demand for natural-gas to firm the wind's intermittency, strengthen the region's electricity grid, maintain military mission, and open-up electricity markets to new electricity generation projects inside my state.

We urge your thorough and expeditious review of the SunZia Draft EIS to advance the project toward commercial reality.

Sincerely,

  
Steve Pearce  
Member of Congress

  
Ben Ray Luján  
Member of Congress

  
Martin Heinrich  
Member of Congress