

HIDALGO COUNTY

RESOLUTION 2009-59

WHEREAS, the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project (SunZia) is proposing to construct up to two high voltage 500 kv transmission lines and related interconnecting substations within an areas lying between central Arizona and central New Mexico, which will provide new delivery capacity for renewable energy resources, primarily wind, solar, and geothermal projects in New Mexico; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico is rich in these renewable energy resources and state and local communities stand to benefit greatly from the creation of new jobs, economic development and resulting revenues for the necessary provision of local governmental services; and,

WHEREAS, New Mexico's renewable energy development resources are located primarily in the central and southern parts of the state where available transmission capacity is extremely limited, and SunZia will provide from 3,000 to 4,500 megawatts of needed transmission capacity; and,

WHEREAS, renewable energy projects are good for the environment and help to minimize our dependence upon foreign oil, reduce pollution and diversify energy generation sources; and

WHEREAS, SunZia has submitted a right-of-way application to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the project and BLM is currently preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); and

WHEREAS, the EIS will provide a detailed analysis of potential environmental impacts of the project and a range of mitigation measures to such impacts, including reasonable routing alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the BLM has conducted nine public scoping meetings throughout SunZia's study area, including Hidalgo County, and has held meetings to request public input; and,

WHEREAS, SunZia has recently expanded the project study area and the BLM will conduct three additional meetings to solicit additional public input; and,

WHEREAS, the BLM is seeking comments on specific issues and concerns related to alternative routes for the project's transmission facilities, affected environmental resources, or related matters; and,

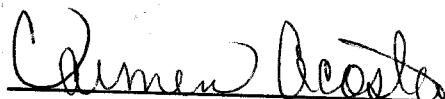
WHEREAS, statements from local governing bodies such as Hidalgo County are very important to the development of a complete record for the EIS.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the board of Hidalgo County Commissioners support the construction and operation of additional transmission infrastructure to provide capacity for the area's renewable energy projects; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT THE BOARD OF HIDALGO COUNTY COMMISSIONERS urge all cooperating agencies to judiciously expedite the SunZia Southwest Transmission Project's Environmental Impact Statement to expand regional economic development opportunities in central and southwestern New Mexico, by creating the necessary transmission capacity to deliver these areas' renewable resources to Western customers and markets.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS 10TH DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2009.

ATTEST:



HAROLD KUENSTLER, CHAIR

HIDALGO COUNTY COMMISSION

CARMEN ACOSTA, CLERK