

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3102

January 25, 2021

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham
Office of the Governor
490 Old Santa Fe Trail #400
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Governor Lujan Grisham,

I am writing you on behalf of the thousands of New Mexico families who need your immediate assistance to save their livelihoods from the ill-advised and hasty actions of the Biden administration. As you know, the U.S. Department of the Interior, at the direction of President Biden, has instituted a 60 day ban on new oil, gas, and coal leases on federal lands. Based upon the president's promise to "end fossil fuels" and allow "no new fracking," I fear a longer ban on new leases may be imminent.

The oil and gas industry is the lifeblood of our state's economy, especially in the Second Congressional District. Economic analysis shows a long-term leasing ban on federal lands would be devastating to our state's economy. If banned today, New Mexico stands to lose more than 60,000 jobs by 2022. The loss of these good-paying, family-supporting jobs would devastate entire communities and have grave long-term consequences for our state.

The loss of revenue from a leasing ban would likewise be catastrophic to our state's general fund – a third of which comes from royalty payments and taxes on the oil and gas industry. This will have the greatest impact on the children of New Mexico. As you know, our K-12 public education system received more than \$1 billion in funding from the oil and gas industry in Fiscal Year 2020, which equates to \$60,062 per teacher and \$3,788 per student. Doña Ana County, the second largest county in New Mexico and the largest in my district, received \$185.24 million in education funding from the oil and gas industry. New Mexico's public education system is already in desperate need and this sudden loss in revenue would be a massive and unnecessary blow.

Therefore, I ask, what are your plans to make up for this loss in jobs and revenue that our state will experience if an additional leasing ban is put in place?

While other members of our congressional delegation have been reluctant to speak out against the president's action, I hope you will join me in urging President Biden to reconsider any moratorium on new oil and gas leases in New Mexico. I stand ready to assist you in protecting our state's jobs and source of revenue. Our state is facing an economic and financial crisis if we do not act, this moment calls for leadership and I hope you join me in standing up for New Mexico.

Sincerely,


Yvette Herrell
Member of Congress

Cc:

New Mexico State House Speaker Brian Egolf

New Mexico State Senate President Pro Tempore Mimi Stewart

New Mexico State House Majority Leader Sheryl Williams Stapleton

New Mexico State House Minority Leader James G. Townsend

New Mexico State Senate Majority Leader Peter Wirth

New Mexico State Senate Minority Leader Gregory A. Baca