

# Federal and State Infrastructure Financing Roundtable

September 30, 2021

Coalition of Sustainable Communities New Mexico

## U.S. Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez (NM-3)

- Passed continuing resolution in Congress to keep federal government operating
- Big difference in addressing climate issues; reason: protect our earth but create job and economic development opportunities, where we need to go to use New Mexico's abundant natural resources; That is why we are moving these bills forward; community solar: making affordable living, jobs, planet all come together.
- \$1T climate related funds are in the bills
- Sen Lujan and Rep. Leger Fernandez include clean up of orphan wells and of methane leaks in the bills.
- Issues: transmission and EV infrastructure in it; biggest place with climate: build back better plan. That sets the priorities of most senate and house Democrats and President Biden; many not willing to give that up. The two bills go together for these reasons.
- NM oil and gas dependent state; invest in transition – the just transition for energy communities – econ dev grants to invest in transition for those communities. Don't know how much.
- Budget resolution for top line issues; Committees' different aspects; may need to be cut
- Grants for states with siting transmissions, constructing renewable energy facilities, community solar facilities for multi-families, reduce high energy burden; \$5m to community projects for those most impacted by climate change.
- The congresswoman needs both bills to go together; enforceability so both go together; willing to vote against the infrastructure bill until they go together; need to fund promises and deal with them.
- Tribal communities; \$35m for geothermal, hydro, solar, wind, and resiliency development for tribes.
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill - \$1 trillion investment mainly in roads and bridges
  - \$6.4 billion to clean up orphan wells
  - \$ money for electrifying school/transit buses, and chargers
  - Money for hydrogen hub
- Build Back Better Plan (reconciliation package)
  - Transition investment fund -
  - Grants/loans for CS li projects, transmission planning and siting
  - 5 billion for community investment funds
  - RE development for tribal projects
- Rep. Leger Fernandez wants legislature to create an office that will help small cities and towns and non-profits access funds. Governor said she will provide human resources to do the same as well.
- Clean hydrogen hub, ensure that it is clean
- Sign up for her official newsletter at [Fernandez.House.gov](mailto:Fernandez.House.gov)
- Rep. Leger Fernandez's Santa Fe office: 505/428-4680; Washington office 202/225-6190

## Levi Patterson, Legislative Aide to Senator Ben Ray Lujan

- Senate side hard at work
- Money creating EV charging in rural areas, critical for deploying a statewide network.
- A lot of energy on both financing and project development side
- Protect investments in our environment
- Optimistic that we will make progress on our priorities
- Areas to highlight:
  - They need to hear from us
  - EV charging and creating **national** charging network; critical to our clean technologies applied equitably
  - Resiliency of physical and natural systems; abandoned wells plugging, orphan mines; clean energy for financing and demo sites: energy storage, hydrogen, climate R&D and modeling earth systems
  - Actively working on these ideas and protecting work on House side: hear from us on what is important to us
  - Climate Accelerator/Green Bank: engage on the details; how to make this work for NM where financing costs can be covered
  - Keep an eye on what matters most to us
  - Prioritizing rollouts to underserved communities
  - Need large investments to help us meet the moment, like national EV infrastructure
  - Electric vehicle tax credit/rebate
  - Plugging methane and all orphan wells
  - Transitioning our fossil-based energy communities to clean energy jobs: choosing underserved communities: funding for demo projects
  - Funds for economic development for vulnerable communities

## Michael Dexter, Southeast Sustainable Directors Network

- Lessons from the Southeast translate to New Mexico where vulnerable communities do not have access to investment dollars
- New fiscal year: area of focus; how legislative priorities are implemented out of agencies. Focus on disadvantaged communities
- Executive Order 14008 Tackling the climate crisis details the Justice40 Initiative with a goal to ensure 40% of funds go to underserved communities - tribal communities as well as those communities with high energy burden, high levels of health disparities, high levels of pollution and other several other factors are among those that the administration has identified as disadvantaged.
- Resilience dollars from FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities grant serves as a significant source of funds that are implementing the administration's Justice40 priorities (<https://www.icf.com/insights/disaster-management/fema-bric-fy2021>)
- Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program is another pilot program for Justice40 and can help individuals in communities improve energy efficiency and weatherization
- How to demonstrate that your community is "disadvantaged" is key as FEMA and other agencies will begin in incorporating this as a factor in scoring criteria for competitive grants alongside other administration priorities including climate resilience and engagement with disadvantaged communities in the planning stages of projects.

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- Always lag between passage of resolution and actual implementation of any grants or financial assistance to communities, American Rescue Plan Act, passed in March, has several opportunities now open on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
- What about grants for individuals for retrofits to help reduce their individual carbon footprints? DOE weatherization assistance program is another pilot program for the Justice 40 Initiative; program is locally administered through a weatherization assistance office run through county government. Key area in helping individuals increase efficiency and reduce energy burden;
- More electric fleets in the SE? Yes, greater interest. Fleets for both transit systems as well as local government facilities fleets.
- Transformational investment is priority for this Admin; regional programs such as Build Back Better Grant and other grant programs could be used for significant investments in public electrification systems. These grants also have a carveout for communities affected by the energy transition (predominantly coal communities)
- SSDN's grant opportunity database:  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iCGiKYQ3BMHenTGSgr087gEIU0ORzNdsm86XckDdaBU/edit?usp=sharing>

### State Rep Linda Serrato (HD-45)

- Rep. Serrato's day job is with Pivotal NM, which helps organizations find and apply for grants
- HB14, Grants Administration Act, would create a Grants Administration Division. Rep. Meredith Dixon introduced this last time; aims to help people coordinate, identify, apply for, and manage grants
- Support from Fed side will help this; executive branch duty with state
- Sustainable building incentive for current homes: Rep Ortez Taos, main sponsor supporting those improvements with tax credits and rebates for income qualified homes;
- Lots of Fed money: coming straight to the state; school districts are getting millions and trying to figure out what to do with that money; more guidance coming from state and other groups
- Recommendations:
  - Grants.gov
  - USDA provides a lot of funding for rural communities
  - Look at state websites and get on their email lists
  - So many different funding sources coming through, get on email lists
  - Pivotal NM has a grants calendar and training for grant writing (for members)
  - Email updates where Pivotal posts training and recovery-related grants/loans:  
<http://eepurl.com/g8rfRH>
  - Here is the first training Pivotal had on navigating Grants.gov:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPLGkbqsFEo&t=5s>
- Must be ready to break projects into smaller chunks
- Reach out to congressional officers or local reps
- State side: budget surplus this year; Rep. Serrato looks for capital outlay projects; reach out; look for investments for 10 years; understand the benefits that apply
- Legislature this session: go through our state senators and representatives to see if ideas are germane
- Capital outlay should be seen as investment opportunities
- Federal: grants and loans; when applying for grants they want to see that you have good credit; low interest loans will make applications more attractive

## JD Bulington

- Climate change task force and DOT are pursuing money for EV charging stations for a network (Jerry Valdez and Aaron Perault at DOT)
- Ask a department before directing money to them. Example: J.D. in last session got \$1.2 million directed to DOT for EV charging to follow model of Oklahoma, which has super fast chargers every 50 miles. \$350k per station, but can charge in 7 min. When trying to get legislature to move money to a department, must get legislature to agree with it upfront. NMED said go forward with capital outlay monies: \$1.2m showed up for this. Bill got changed. Ended up at DOT.
- 2 types of state money
  - unrestricted funds/special appropriations (recurring, like salaries or nonrecurring, like projects)
  - Capital Outlay (bonding capacity - severance tax bonds) - can only be used for tangible assets (at least 10 year life) - solar panels, vehicles, buildings - has several categories - discretionary (every legislator gets funds), and then governor's funds
- Much available this year. Cash for capital outlays; first come first serve; needs to be packaged.
- Renewable energy and sustainability are popular projects.
- The policy environment is changing, for example, the rush toward supporting "hydrogen". Landscape and technology changing fast. The sky is the limit on these projects.

## Attendees

### Coalition Members

- Lisa LaRocque, City of Las Cruces
- Beth Beloff, Coalition Staff
- Gary Payton, Coalition Staff
- Christian Casillas, Coalition Staff
- Ken Hughes, Coalition Staff
- Jane Yee, City of Albuquerque
- Kelsey Rader, City of Albuquerque
- Adeline Murthy, Santa Fe County
- Mark Hayden, General Services Department
- Angelica Gurule, Los Alamos County
- Anna Hansen, Santa Fe County
- Hank Hughes, Santa Fe County
- Neal Denton, City of Santa Fe
- Jenny Hernandez, City of Las Cruces
- Katie Leonard, Los Alamos County
- Erick Aune, Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization

### Others

- Clay Campbell, Bernalillo County
- Amanda Hatherly, Santa Fe Community College
- Mayane Chavez Barudin, Sovereign Energy
- Clarissa Bhargava, Sen. Lujan
- Ravi Subramaniam, Sen. Lujan
- Jacqueline Waite, Energy Minerals and Natural Resources Department
- Douglas Campion, Green Works

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- Elizabeth Arevalo, Rep. Leger Fernandez
- Derrick Toledo, Rep. Leger Fernandez