

**MINUTES
of the
THIRD MEETING
of the
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE**

**August 31, 2023
Santa Rosa Convention Center
1085 Blue Hole Road
Santa Rosa**

**September 1, 2023
Corona Range and Livestock Research Center
8 Miles East of Corona on Torrance County Road CO20
Corona**

The third meeting of the Science, Technology and Telecommunications Committee was called to order by Representative Debra M. Sariñana, chair, on August 31, 2023 at 10:37 a.m. at the Santa Rosa Convention Center in Santa Rosa.

Present

Rep. Debra M. Sariñana, Chair
Sen. Siah Correa Hemphill, Vice Chair (8/31)
Rep. Janelle Anyanonu (9/1)
Rep. Joy Garratt
Rep. Charlotte Little
Sen. Michael Padilla (8/31)
Sen. William P. Soules

Absent

Sen. Craig W. Brandt
Sen. William F. Burt
Rep. Jason C. Harper
Rep. Joshua N. Hernandez
Sen. Harold Pope

Advisory Members

Sen. Shannon D. Pinto
Sen. Nancy Rodriguez (9/1)

Rep. Christine Chandler
Rep. Gail Chasey
Rep. Yanira Gurrola
Rep. Jenifer Jones
Rep. Willie D. Madrid
Sen. Bill B. O'Neill
Rep. Larry R. Scott
Rep. Linda Serrato

(Attendance dates are noted for members not present for the entire meeting.)

Staff

Mark Edwards, Bill Drafter, Legislative Council Service (LCS)
Ralph Vincent, Systems Consultant, LCS
Markela Clinton, Committee Coordinator, LCS

Guests

The guest list is in the meeting file.

Handouts

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

References to Webcast

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at www.nmlegis.gov, under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

Thursday, August 31 — Santa Rosa

Welcome and Introductions (10:37 a.m.)

Representative Sariñana welcomed the committee, and members of the committee and staff introduced themselves.

Las Cruces Public School District Electric Bus Program (10:41 a.m.)

Gabe Jacquez, deputy superintendent for operations, Las Cruces Public School District; Sean Barham, executive director of operations, Las Cruces Public School District; and Charles Goodmacher, lobbyist, NMVC Action Fund, discussed the use of electric buses in the school district. Mr. Jacquez and Mr. Barham described the use of federal grants to replace diesel buses with electric buses and to build infrastructure to accommodate the electric buses. Mr. Goodmacher reviewed the financial benefits of the program. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=8/31/2023&ItemNumber=2>.

Santa Rosa Community Welcome and Update (12:27 p.m.)

Shelly Eiland welcomed the committee to Santa Rosa on behalf of Nelson Kotiar, mayor, City of Santa Rosa.

Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System Replacement Project Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) Spotlight Report Update (12:28 p.m.)

Jessica Hitzman, Fiscal Analyst, LFC, gave a report on the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System replacement project for the Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD). She gave a detailed breakdown of the project's scope and goals, the history of the project and the projected benefits of the project to the community. A committee member asked

that a formal letter be sent to the CYFD to request a full report on the history of the project and whether this project is a continuation of an earlier project called "EPICS". The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/STTC%20083123%20Item%203%20Update%20on%20Spot%20light%20Report%20on%20Comprehensive%20Child%20Welfare%20Information%20System.pdf>

Update on Technology Investments in Law Enforcement (1:05 p.m.)

Carolyn Huynh, deputy chief, Training and Recruiting and Innovation Bureaus, New Mexico State Police, and J.J. Griego, deputy chief of police, Albuquerque Police Department (APD), gave an overview on how technology is being used in their respective agencies to investigate crimes and reduce crime rates. They also discussed an interagency communication system that has been established to better fight crime. Ryan Schmidt, captain, Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office (BCSO), and Will Corvin, lieutenant, BCSO, gave information about the BCSO's current technology systems, explained where their organizations need support and discussed how constant changes in technology make it difficult for law enforcement to keep up. The committee heard about law enforcement staffing needs and how evidence is being processed by new technology. Kent Augustine, chief information officer, Department of Public Safety, and Amanda Christensen, lieutenant, Special Victims Unit, APD, discussed how law enforcement officers are staying connected across departments and through information technology. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/STTC%20083123%20Item%204%20Real%20Time%20Crime%20Center%20presentation.pdf>

Progress on Implementing Community Solar in New Mexico (3:00 p.m.)

Kevin Cray, mountain west senior director, Coalition for Community Solar Access, presented an update on the process of providing solar energy to rural New Mexico communities. He explained why certain locations have effective community solar projects. He also talked about solar options for families and the process that they go through to qualify for government assistance to install solar energy systems in their homes. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/STTC%20083123%20Item%205%20Cray%20--%20Progress%20on%20Community%20Solar.pdf>

Update on Public Regulation Commission (PRC) Electric Grid Programs and Efforts (3:48 p.m.)

Patrick O'Connell, chair, PRC, and Cholla Khoury, chief of staff, PRC, spoke on the PRC's plans and goals. They provided an overview of the PRC's staff structure and how the advisory and advocacy staff roles complement each other.

Thursday August 31 — Corona

Tour of Corona Range and Livestock Research Center (9:10 a.m.)

Committee members and staff toured the Corona Range and Livestock Research Center.

Welcome and New Mexico State University (NMSU) Status of the Corona Range and Livestock Research Center (10:41 a.m.)

Shad Cox, superintendent, Corona Range and Livestock Research Center, NMSU, spoke about what students are learning through research and development on the campus. Lara Prihodoko, Ph.D., associate director, Agricultural Experiment Station, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, NMSU, spoke about wildlife care and research at the center and future goals. Marcus Krohn, senior systems developer, Information Technology and Help Desk, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, NMSU, spoke about the current state of the center's information technologies and its goals for improvement.

Enhancing Grid Stability and Resiliency with Small-Scale Energy Storage (11:09 a.m.)

Jim DesJardins, executive director, Renewable Energy Industries Association of New Mexico, gave a presentation on the importance of small-scale storage for energy produced in New Mexico. He discussed the practical application of energy storage in case of an emergency, general energy management and how energy storage capacity supports civilians. The presentation can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/handouts/STTC%20083123%20Item%208%20Grid%20Resiliency%20and%20Small-Scale%20Storage.pdf>.

Utility-Scale Storage and Grid Modernization (11:43 a.m.)

Polly Shaw, chief external relations officer, Plus Power, and Wardah Abbasi, project director, NextEra Energy Resources, spoke about the need for responsible energy management due to the increase in energy sources and the stress that will place on the power distribution grid. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=8/31/2023&ItemNumber=9>.

Regional Transmission Organization (RTO) 101 and New Mexico Renewable Build Out (1:30 p.m.)

Rikki Seguin, executive director, Interwest Energy Alliance, spoke about the increase in demand for renewable energy, changes that are coming to the electrical grid and the dynamics of an organized wholesale energy market. Fernando Martinez, executive director, New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority, explained the hands-on work that goes into improving the western electric grid, and he noted emerging impacts to RTOs. John C. Tysseling,

Energy, Economic and Environmental Consultants, LLC, explained how these changes have benefited New Mexico residents and discussed the importance of RTO market management. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=STTC&Date=8/31/2023&ItemNumber=10>.

New Mexico Renewable Build Out Deep Dive: North Path Transmission Project (3:05 p.m.)

William Consuegra, director, Transmission Development (West), Invenergy, illustrated how New Mexico is complying with the New Mexico Renewable Energy Transmission Authority Act and reviewed the new infrastructure projects underway that are designed to keep up with the increase of energy and renewable energy production.

Pattern Energy Projects (3:35 p.m.)

Jeremy Turner, director of development, Pattern Energy New Mexico, showcased Pattern Energy New Mexico's plan to expand its current operation. The expansion would allow Pattern Energy New Mexico to increase energy production while preserving native wildlife and the environment.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 3:56 p.m.