A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO ARRANGE FOR
A THIRD-PARTY FACILITATOR TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO
REVIEW STATEWIDE COMMUNITY SOLAR INITIATIVES AND DEVELOP
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THOSE INITIATIVES.

WHEREAS, solar energy production installations convert
energy from sunlight into electricity through the use of
photovoltaics or concentrated solar power; and
WHEREAS, solar energy is an environmentally friendly
renewable energy source that can help reduce electricity
bills and has diverse applications; and
WHEREAS, solar energy production has risen over the
course of the past several years, and this trend is expected
to continue; and
WHEREAS, by the middle of 2018, five and three-tenths
gigawatts of solar capacity had been installed in the United
States, producing enough energy to power eleven million
homes; and
WHEREAS, employment in the solar energy sector more
than doubled between 2010 and 2017, from approximately
ninety-three thousand to two hundred fifty thousand jobs; and
WHEREAS, in 2017, thirty-two percent of households in
New Mexico were renting, and thirty percent of those
households fell below the federal poverty line; and
WHEREAS, rooftop solar is generally not affordable nor accessible to low-income families and renters; and

WHEREAS, community solar allows for low-income families and renters to access solar energy and reduce their electricity bills; and

WHEREAS, nineteen states and the District of Columbia have policies and programs supporting community solar development; and

WHEREAS, with its abundance of sunshine, New Mexico is among the states that can derive the greatest benefits from solar energy production; and

WHEREAS, community solar initiatives would allow for local governments, multiple individuals and entities to share the benefits of a single solar facility to which they subscribe and obtain monetary credit on their utility bills for a portion of the solar power produced; and

WHEREAS, participation and recommendations from the energy, minerals and natural resources department, the public regulation commission, utility companies, electric cooperatives, renewable energy industry representatives, Indian nations, tribes and pueblos, low-income service providers, local governments and community members from all regions of the state would be a key component to the success of community solar initiatives statewide;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE
STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the New Mexico legislative council be requested to arrange for a third-party facilitator to convene a working group no later than March 21, 2020 to review statewide community solar initiatives and develop recommendations for implementation of those initiatives that result in a sustainable and scalable market-based program for the state of New Mexico; provided that the third-party facilitator shall facilitate without compensation from the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be composed of representatives from the energy, minerals and natural resources department; the public regulation commission; utility companies; electric cooperatives; renewable energy industry representatives; the New Mexico municipal league; environmental organizations; Indian nations, tribes and pueblos; low-income service providers; and local governments, cities, counties and interested community members from throughout the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested to report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate interim legislative committee by October 1, 2020; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the co-chairs of the New Mexico legislative council.