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Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter statement on today's bad news for a livable climate

"Today, Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham vetoed every remaining significant climate-protecting measure the Legislature passed in 2023.

"The five credits for electric vehicles, energy storage, and geothermal development would have made some progress in preventing climate disaster, as would the geothermal center of excellence and fund, which could also be a significant economic-development tool for New Mexico. We are facing a climate emergency that requires emergency action, not vetoes.

"More than 1,000 people called or wrote to urge the governor to pass Game Commission reform, climate tax credits, expanded litter reduction and recycling efforts and a plan for geothermal development. None of them were signed into law.

"New Mexicans understand the critical need for climate solutions for ourselves and our families, especially after last year's devastating fires and floods. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change tells us we should be sprinting when it comes to climate action, and we're crawling. Vetoing the only progress we made in this session is turning us around and moving us in the wrong direction."

The climate tax credits would have amounted to a drop in the bucket of New Mexico's budget, and almost all are short-term and sunset in five years but would have boosted emerging industries. Below is a summary:

HB412/SB22: Credits to purchase or lease electric vehicles of \$2,500, or \$4,000 for lower-income New Mexicans. The credit is transferable to be taken off the price of the car and refundable. EVs save New Mexicans an estimated \$2,400-\$3,000 a year in fuel costs. With federal credits and state credits, lower-priced EVs like the Chevrolet Bolt would cost much less than the average used car, resulting in much lower monthly payouts. There was \$10 million a year appropriated for this credit.

HB32: Tax credits for New Mexicans who invest in energy storage systems for their homes and/or businesses. Home storage protects against blackouts, supports our electric grid and lowers utility costs for all customers.

SB173: Credits for geothermal electricity production. Geothermal is reliable 24/7 baseload power that is renewable and has a small physical footprint. New Mexico is sixth in the nation for geothermal potential. There was \$4 million a year appropriated for this credit.

SB45: Credits for efficient ground-source heat pumps, which are efficient and money-saving ways for New Mexicans to electrify. This type of initiative is needed if we are to transition from gas use as scientists say we must by 2050.

HB67: Provides a gross-receipts tax deduction for sales to governments on energy-storage systems.

The other bill that remained unsigned today was:

[HB365](#): Geothermal Center & Fund (Ortiz y Pino, Ferrary, Lujan, Sariñana, Roybal Caballero): Geothermal is a renewable, 24/7 energy resource, and New Mexico is sixth in the nation in geothermal potential. This bill funds a geothermal resource center at NM Tech and offers funding to further develop geothermal resources in New Mexico.

[HB184](#), Game Commission Appointment process, broadening and diversifying commission membership. The state Game Commission, a seven-member board appointed by the governor, has been in disarray for years. HB184, reforming the commission, passed both chambers with significant bipartisan support. A number of groups with very diverse wildlife views emerged to support the bill in committee hearings, reflecting the dire need for reform.

[SB182](#), Recycling and Litter Reduction, restoring the Recycling and Waste Coordinator at the Environment Department. This legislation would have given the Tourism Department more flexibility in how they conduct their outreach/education efforts for anti-litter. It would have created a new FTE in the New Mexico Environment Department that can work to promote goals outlined in the NM Solid Waste Bureau's Solid Waste Management Plan and it is funded through an existing fund.