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New Mexico has recognized the importance of wind energy for years. Now, as we consider economic recovery in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, those turbines you see spinning in the distance are more important than ever. They can unlock our state's potential to be a national leader in wind energy.

Last week, all across the country communities celebrated and reflected on the benefits that wind has brought them. Right now, our State boasts 1,952 megawatts of installed wind capacity. That is enough electrical energy to power over 600,000 typical New Mexico homes.

Right here in Curry County, Pattern Energy's Broadview and Grady Wind Projects generate enough renewable energy to power up to 125,000 homes and will contribute up to \$90 million to local governments in Curry County over its first 25 years in operation. In Roosevelt County, Xcel Energy's Sagamore Wind Project south of Portales will add 240 turbines, 522 megawatts, plus 400 construction jobs and will power 194,000 homes annually.

The gradual progress in harnessing clean wind power has done wonders for our State. In 2019 alone, wind turbine projects supported nearly 3,000 jobs across New Mexico and attracted \$3.4 billion in capital investment. New Mexico's overall potential wind capacity is 652,575 megawatts. This ranks New Mexico as the third highest in the nation. New Mexico has immense unlocked potential in this growing industry as implementing clean renewable energy policy will safeguard our economic future.

Already, community institutions are recognizing the importance of preparing workers for the demand for well-paying jobs in this market. Clovis Community College (CCC) has Renewable Energy Program Certificate and Associate Degree Program and students are working with Sagamore Project. Also, at Eastern New Mexico University's (ENMU) Renewable Energy emphasis in Electronics Engineering Technology provides students with a comprehensive overview of renewable energy resources, including wind power. The program uses simulations and hardware applications to provide students with knowledge of computer systems design, electronics systems, communication circuits, industrial controls, and control systems design. Internships with businesses and laboratories within our State provide students with the experience of working with engineers and scientists to apply their technical knowledge in professional settings. Our region, here in Eastern New Mexico provides many examples of large-scale energy-producing wind farms. As one of the fastest-growing sources of electricity in the world, wind energy continues to be the focus of job opportunities for program graduates.

Just as important, the tax revenue generated from wind farms helps support vital public services that are even more important now than ever before as New Mexicans are braving their way through this pandemic. The \$8 million per year in State and local tax payments received in New Mexico from wind projects help fund schools, hospitals, and more.

If we prioritize wind energy now, we will reap the benefits of a diversified economy, a more resilient workforce and the boundless opportunities of this clean and natural source of energy for generations to come.