

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 24, 2026

The Honorable Dale Marks
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy,
Installations, and Environment
U.S. Department of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Assistant Secretary Marks:

I write to you today out of concern over stalled energy projects in New Mexico and across the United States. I have heard from multiple energy stakeholders in my district who have pending mitigation agreements for their energy projects stalled at the Office of Energy, Installations, and Environment. I am requesting more information from you regarding the delay in the execution of these agreements.

As the representative of New Mexico's 2nd Congressional District, the home of critical Department of Defense equities such as White Sands Missile Range and Holloman Air Force Base, ensuring energy resilience for our warfighters is non-negotiable. Utilizing all forms of energy sources is increasingly imperative to maintaining readiness.

You confirmed this sentiment during the House Armed Services Committee Hearing on March 4, 2026, when you testified that the Department was "all in" on "all technologies" when investing in alternative energy sources to support Department installations. During your testimony, you acknowledged that "97% of our energy comes off the installations not on," and that New Mexico possessed "unique opportunities" to meet the Department's energy demands. New Mexico has rich natural resources across all energy types, from the oil in the Permian Basin to its abundant solar, wind, and geothermal potential. Maintaining cooperations and agreements across this spectrum of energy resources doesn't just benefit New Mexicans — it is absolutely imperative that we solidify and diversify energy sources for military installations as a matter of national security.

That is why it is especially concerning to hear that the Office of Energy, Installations, and the Environment has reportedly not executed mitigation agreements for energy projects in New Mexico for several months. Certain energy projects built in and around Department installations require approval under "mitigation agreements" to proceed. Despite the Federal Aviation Administration approving many of these agreements in the preceding months, the Department has yet to execute or provide reasoning as to why these agreements are not being executed, and it is making our country less safe.

Energy producers in New Mexico are eager to harness our natural landscape to produce thousands of gigawatt hours worth of energy, increase power throughout the state, lower energy costs, and ensure there is enough

available power for Department bases, service members, and their families. While it's important to ensure that these projects do not adversely impact military training, testing, or operations, multiple mitigation agreements have not been executed by the Department for over seven months, and the Department has failed to relay any concerns to project developers. At a time of unprecedented energy costs for Americans and risks to U.S. grid reliability due and security to rising demand and increasing threats, we must remove any unnecessary delays or barriers and support energy affordability and resilience.

As such, I request answers from the Department on the following by no later than May 26, 2026:

1. Has the Department paused or suspended execution of mitigation agreements? If so, why?
2. How many mitigation agreements have been executed in the past 6 months? How many remain to be reviewed?
3. When does the Department intend to resume executing agreements?
4. What is the timeline for executing the remaining mitigation agreements?
5. What criteria does your department use to prioritize and advance mitigation agreements, if at all?

Thank you and I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gabe Vasquez', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress