



Clear Horizons Act tabled in committee

- [By Megan Gleason / Business Editor](#)
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SANTA FE — The Clear Horizons Act was tabled in committee Monday. The Senate Finance Committee voted 6-5 to table Senate Bill 4, a priority of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham.

The legislation would've codified limits on greenhouse gas emissions, set in place by executive order, in increasing amounts over the next decades, with a net-zero target by 2050.

“It’s a little too rapid for me,” said committee chair Sen. George Muñoz, D-Gallup, adding that the state will get there eventually. He and Sen. Benny Shendo, D-Jemez Pueblo, were the two Democrats to join Republicans in tabling the bill.

Hundreds of New Mexicans showed up in person and remotely to show their support or opposition for the Clear Horizons Act. Public comment went on for about an hour, with dozens of people speaking on both sides.

A lot of public opposition came from agriculture workers as well as oil and gas industry members. Both industries emit greenhouse gases, though oil and gas [leads the state](#) in its emissions footprint.

Individuals from the Four Corners region also spoke in fear that SB4 would only worsen economic disruption that was caused by the Public Service Company of New Mexico retiring the coal-fired San Juan Generating Station. It’s something the utility assumably did to meet clean energy standards set by the 2019 Energy Transition Act.

There are many Native residents in the northwestern part of the state, as it overlaps with the Navajo Nation. Shendo said his concern over the bill revolved around subsequently increased fuel and propane prices. He said he’s never seen someone drive an electric vehicle on Jemez Pueblo.

“It’s important to consult tribes and the nation about these issues,” bill sponsor Sen. Mimi Stewart, D-Santa Fe, agreed in response to his concerns, highlighting that “overburdened populations,” or particularly vulnerable communities, would be prioritized in the bill.

Republican committee members voiced a distrust for the Environmental Improvement Board, the state entity that would be responsible for crafting and enforcing rules for the Clear Horizons Act.

After the committee, Stewart said in a statement that “we must summon the courage to lead, or we will pay a far greater price.”

“The cost of inaction on climate is devastating,” she said. “New Mexico’s communities are already reeling from wildfires, drought and extreme weather, with billions spent in recovery while we fail to invest in prevention and opportunity for our communities. By refusing to pass the Clear Horizons Act, we are turning our backs on the families, workers and businesses who need certainty and action today — not just empty promises for tomorrow.”

Environmental advocates were similarly disappointed following the committee, many of whom applauded Stewart’s efforts to pass what turned into a contentious bill.

A bill isn’t truly dead until the end of the session. Legislators can attempt to revive efforts through blank bills, known as dummy bills, introduced before the filing deadline.

“Companies in New Mexico are making a lot of money off of our oil and gas,” Stewart said in the committee, “and what we want to promote is that all of us have to work together to lower these greenhouse gases.”