

Senator:

My name is Frank Pagurko, and I write to you on behalf of the Rio Grande Foundation, an economic policy think tank based in Albuquerque. We work to promote the interests of the people of New Mexico through free market policy.

In the interest of New Mexico students and taxpayers, I strongly urge you to **vote NO** on SB 63, the “Photovoltaic Systems in New Public Schools” bill. This bill mandates an unnecessary cost increase for new school construction projects. The cost of installing solar panels would necessitate either cutting expenditures on actual educational space or raising costs for already overburdened taxpayers. Piling more expenses onto the New Mexico school system is not a recipe for success.

This bill is another example of Santa Fe setting mandates for local school districts without regard for the individual needs and decision-making of those districts. Local communities should be free to determine the needs of their schools, whether or not that includes solar panels on new constructions. Raising the cost of building a new school and adding the expense of subsequent maintenance of photovoltaic systems to school budgets is not a good way to ensure improved educational outcomes. Please vote no on SB 63. Thank you.



Frank Pagurko III