New Mexico is a state with more than 300 days of sunshine. Does it make sense that only 6.4% of our electricity is generated by the sun?

Together, we can change this story! With community-owned, operated, and generated renewable electricity, we can create a brighter future today and inspire communities around the world.

What is Local Choice Energy?

Local Choice Energy (LCE) legislation is a small but meaningful legal change that would let local governments and tribes generate or purchase renewable electricity and sell it to us at lower prices. Electricity would be transmitted in partnership with investor-owned utility companies (IOUs) on their grid, for a fee, and people living in the service area of a Local Choice Energy Provider would be able to choose to keep their existing service or change it.

Instead of sending profits to Wall Street, Local Choice Energy invests in the resiliency of our communities, providing reliable, cheaper electricity, while creating local jobs and improving local economies. When Local Choice Energy becomes the law of the land, communities that want to create Local Choice Energy programs will be able to do so by passing municipal or county ordinances, or in the case of tribal government, through the tribal government process in place.

Why is Local Choice Energy good for New Mexico?

LCE (also sometimes called Community Choice Aggregation or CCA) is a proven approach that serves millions of people in more than 1300 communities in 10 states.

Communities served by community-owned electricity providers enjoy more resiliency.

Ratepayers served by community-owned electric utilities enjoy 15-20% lower rates nationally. In New Mexico, the average monthly residential bills of municipally-owned utilities are 25% less than investor-owned utilities like PNM, EPE, and SPS according to reports from the US Energy Information Administration.

Community-owned electricity providers are accelerating the transition to renewable energy. All communities in the U.S. that have achieved 100% renewable power are served by community-owned electricity providers.

LCE is local economic development, investing profits in local communities, creating jobs, and attracting businesses seeking renewable electricity at lower prices.

Passing LCE will make it easier for New Mexican communities to take advantage of once-in-a-lifetime funding forthcoming from the Inflation Reduction Act, the Infrastructure Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act for clean energy production and addressing climate risk. These funds can be used to create the infrastructure needed for community-owned utilities and microgrids that will ensure the resiliency of our communities for decades to come.

LCE allows us to have local control of our electric generation and not be subject to out-of-state, out-of-country monopoly utility companies that provide us with the most expensive energy and take their profits out of New Mexico.

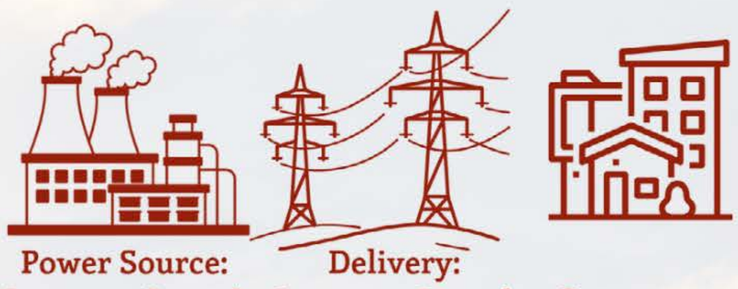
New Mexicans deserve choices.

73% of New Mexicans are served by three electric utilities (PNM, SPS/Xcel, EPE) that are owned by investors (IOUs), and under current law, New Mexicans aren't able to choose other electricity providers. The IOUs are required to make profits for their investors. Dirty fuels are more profitable, despite how destructive they are, and the IOUs are incentivized to use them for as long as they can. In 2021 PNM had just 10% solar in its energy portfolio. SPS had only 2% solar. EPE only had 5% renewable energy in 2020. With Local Choice Energy, we could empower our communities to be able to make better choices. We can create our renewable energy future, right here, right now, powered by our communities and the sun.

How is Local Choice Energy different from Community Solar?

Community Solar is limited in its reach: a maximum of 200MW statewide and 5MW per project. Local Choice Energy would allow communities to generate or purchase as much renewable energy as they need. (For comparison, the City of Santa Fe alone uses nearly 200 MW at its peak.) The financial benefits of Community Solar go to the private developer and subscribers of the project, whereas Local Choice Energy revenues benefit the local communities they serve and are reinvested back into local government budgets for community needs. Also, the IOUs are delaying the implementation of the Community Solar Act the legislature passed and the governor signed into law in 2021 through lawsuits, unfair billing proposals, proposed limitations, and other regulatory filings, because they fear that community-generated solar energy is a threat to their business. New Mexicans deserve more choices.

How Our Existing System Works



Power Source: Investor-Owned Utility
Investor-owned utility power plant generates energy

Delivery: Investor-Owned Utility
Investor-owned utility delivers energy for a fee

Customers
Electricity is transmitted to communities, while the profits are exported to Wall Street

How Local Choice Energy Works

Power Source: Local Choice Energy Provider
Our communities have a choice in buying and generating energy locally and from renewable sources

Delivery: Investor-Owned Utility
Investor-owned utility delivers energy for a fee

Customer: Our Communities
Our communities benefit from affordable rates, local control and cleaner energy

Consider these facts:

- Electricity providers owned by municipalities in New Mexico have 25% lower residential average monthly bills than IOUs and coops.
- Local Choice Energy legislation includes protections for workers and supports unions.
- Locally-generated electricity is more reliable and resilient than the status quo.

How can we get Local Choice Energy?

We need to pass a law in New Mexico in 2023 to bring Local Choice Energy to our communities. We're growing a grassroots movement across the state in order to do this, and you can join us. Sign up at publicpowernm.org, and help us by calling your legislators, county commissioners, mayors, councilors, and other community leaders to ask for their support. Help us spread the word and win!

Local Choice Energy is endorsed by:

McKinley Collaborative for Health Equity
Veterans for Peace
NM Climate Justice
Water Protectors Legal Collective
Democratic Party of New Mexico Environmental Justice Caucus
Center for Biological Diversity
Renewable Taos
Indivisible Santa Fe
Las Vegas Peace & Justice Center
Indigenous Lifeways
YUCCA
Retake Our Democracy
Honor the Earth
350 Santa Fe
Pueblo Action Alliance
1680
Indivisible Albuquerque
Adelante Progressive Caucus
Gila Resources Information Project
New Mexico Social Justice & Equity Institute
new energy economy
Interfaith Worker Justice-NM
H.O.P.E.
Public Power New Mexico
PSR Physicians for Social Responsibility
EarthCare

For more information and to get involved, visit publicpowernm.org