



Southwest Energy Efficiency Project

Saving Money and Reducing Pollution through Energy Conservation

February 1, 2003

TO: New Mexico House Taxation and Revenue Committee Members

FR: Howard Geller, Executive Director

RE: Letter of Support for House Bill 70

Dear House Taxation and Revenue Committee Members,

I am writing to express my support for HB 70, introduced by Representative Miguel Garcia, and awaiting hearing in front of the Taxation and Revenue Committee.

Alternative fuel and hybrid-electric vehicles are now at the forefront of personal vehicle technology development, and this technology continues to evolve. Three hybrid-electric models are currently available for purchase, and as many as eight new models, including hybrid pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles, are expected to hit showroom floors by 2006. With their excellent fuel economy and reduced tailpipe emissions over equivalent conventional vehicles, alternative fuel vehicles and hybrids are a viable transportation option today, unlike fuel cell vehicles which while promising are still many years away. In short, these vehicles will help the U.S. cut its oil import dependence, which is high and growing.

Though alternative fuel and hybrid electric vehicle technology is advancing, according to a January 28, 2003 *New York Times* article, only about 150,000 of these vehicles have been sold worldwide since their market introduction in the late 1990s. By comparison, 17.8 million new vehicles (cars and light-trucks) were purchased in the United States in 2000 alone (U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis). While automakers and the buying public have begun to recognize the value of these alternative technologies, we still have a ways to go, and legislation like HB 70 will help get us there.

HB 70 is a reasonable step forward in supporting alternative fuel and hybrid-electric vehicles. It provides an important and needed financial incentive to the purchasers of this technology, one that will work towards the benefit of all New Mexicans. I urge you to support HB 70.

Thank you.