



July 23, 2024

Chair Bruce Westerman  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Raul Grijalva  
House Natural Resources Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Chair Pete Stauber  
Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee  
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Alexandria Ocasio Cortez  
Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of EDF Renewables, I write in support of H.R. 8954. We appreciate the committee's consideration of this legislation.

H.R. 8954 addresses the problem that rent and fee payments from wind and solar projects on Bureau of Land Management (BLM) lands go entirely to Washington, D.C., and none of those payments go to the local community. That is in stark contrast not just to geothermal, oil and gas operations on BLM lands, but also to the typical revenue streams to local governments from wind and solar projects on private lands.

We note that the American Southwest, including Arizona, Nevada and California, is the home of the best solar insolation in the nation, ranking fourth, fifth and first respectively in the nation in solar generation capacity as of Q1 2024 according to the Solar Energy Industries Association. The desert Southwest will continue to attract interest for new solar as electric utilities seek low-cost power for its customers amid rising demand for electricity nationwide. That demand makes H.R. 8954 particularly important to ensure that those communities in the Southwest and other renewables-rich parts of the West receive robust, project-based revenues just as they would if the project was on local private land.

In addition to revenue sharing policy as proposed in H.R. 8954, we also recommend the committee to consider reforming wind and solar permitting policies on federal lands as proposed in H.R. 9012. The bill applies practical approaches to the permitting of renewable energy on federal lands so that projects can move forward in a timely and cost-effective manner. For example, it applies timelines for the first two key milestones for project permitting, while still maintaining reasonable and meaningful agency review. It also clarifies the role of Renewable Energy Coordination Office staff, consistent with many expectations upon the creation of that role within BLM. These provisions among others maintain the important controls on project permitting that heed biological, geological, community, cultural and multi-use imperatives.



EDF Renewables has extensive experience building and operating renewable energy projects on federal lands, including the 234-MW Switch solar project in operation in Clark County, Nevada, and the 214-MW Desert Harvest project in operation in Riverside County, California. If the revenue-sharing provisions in H.R. 8954 were in effect when those projects became operational, then the projects would have provided \$13.2 million in funds to county and state governments over their contracted lives. Instead, those funds and more go entirely to federal coffers.

We thank you for your ongoing work on delivering energy benefits to all American communities. As a company that has operated and built renewable energy projects in the U.S. for almost 40 years, we at EDF Renewables commit ourselves every day to work safely and in balance with natural, cultural, and community imperatives. Please see us as an ongoing partner to support responsible energy policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Virinder Singh".

Virinder Singh  
Vice President, Regulatory & Legislative Affairs