More than 200 educators from across New Mexico sent a letter to members of the state legislature and the U. S. Congress on Nov. 30 asking that the New Mexico Oil & Gas Association stop using educators and students in public campaigns to promote more oil and gas development, block efforts to diversify state revenues, address climate change and make changes to the federal oil and gas program.

The letter follows an early effort in July 2021, when organizations representing thousands of teachers and educators across New Mexico sent a letter to Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and state legislative leaders expressing concern about the state's over-reliance on fossil fuel extraction for education funding.

The letter follows.

November 30, 2021

Leland Gould

President & CEO

New Mexico Oil & Gas Association

P.O. Box 1864

Santa Fe, NM 87504

Dear Mr. Gould,

We, the undersigned individual educators (including early childhood, K-12 and higher education, in all job categories), are writing to request that the oil and gas industry and its allies immediately stop using New Mexico teachers and kids as excuses for more oil and gas development. As educators, we have dedicated our lives to our students. We are deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change like extreme drought, wildfires, and air pollution, and what that will mean for future generations. It has been extremely disappointing to watch the oil and gas industry and its allies use educators and students as props in campaigns against progress on climate and clean energy policies, particularly President Joe Biden and Interior Secretary Deb Haaland's efforts to pause new oil and gas leasing and make changes to the federal oil and gas leasing program.

The industry and allies have used the same misleading tactics to block legislation to diversify state revenues. Recent campaigns have sought to scare the public and educators alike about the impacts of those policies using industry-funded, discredited and inaccurate data. Using images of students in schools gives the impression that New Mexico educators support the industry's one-sided position, which is disingenuous and misleading to the public.

An analysis from the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee shows that New Mexico has not seen virtually any of the impacts from the leasing pause that industry predicted. With royalties and production of oil and gas in New Mexico at record levels, we believe now is the perfect time to begin moving away from oil and gas.

We appreciate the funding generated for our state's education system from every source, including from oil and gas. But relying so heavily on one industry, has unfortunately had negative consequences for students, as school funding has risen and fallen along with the industry's fortunes. Whether our students receive services they need should never depend on

the price of a commodity. For education to succeed, we need our elected leaders to diversify our revenue sources, so that teacher salaries and classroom resources are not taken for a ride every time there is a boom and eventual bust cycle in the oil and gas industry.

We firmly believe our state, our country, and all nations must transition as quickly as possible away from fossil fuels. Science shows that immediate cuts must be made to our carbon emissions, which means we must transition rapidly to clean energy alternatives and use less oil and gas. We wholeheartedly support this transition.

New Mexico children deserve an education system from early childhood through higher education funded by stable and consistent sources of revenue which do not also contribute to endangering their future on this planet and our own Land of Enchantment.

We continue to urge our elected leaders to move as quickly as possible to make significant changes to our energy and revenue systems. At the same time, we strongly urge the oil and gas industry and its allies to stop standing in the way of aggressive action to address climate change and to stop pretending educators and students are solely on your side.

Respectfully,

Christopher Adams

Theresa Adams

Leah Ahkee-Baczkiewicz

Margaret Alire

Sascha Anderson

John Andrews

Gail Ansheles

Serina Apodaca-Peckham

Crystal Arias

Jennifer Arlin

Samantha Ashby

Carlos Avila

Mahsa Azma

Rita Baca

Deana Baker

Mary Balderrama

Amanda Barela

Graciela Bazzanella

Isabel Bearman Bucher

Rebecca Belletto

Michelle Ben

Mary Bissell

Delandra Bitsuie

Charles Bowyer

Eleanor Bravo

Marlene Brown

Stanley Burg

Deena Burnett

Amy Butel

Biviana Cadena

Elizabeth Cadena McDonald

Roxanne Candelaria-Ley

Cindy Carr

Kristi Carr

Cheryl Carreon

Rosalinda Carreon Altamirano

Tonia Caselman

Cassandra Cde Baca

Ronald Christ

Elaine Cimino

Vary Coates

Martha Cooke

Yvonne Corder

Monique Cordova

Pam Cordova

Sierra Corriveau

Elynn Cowden

Rhonda Crespo

Jerry Cronin

Kay D’Antonio

Mary Daniel-Montoya

Denise Dawson

Christopher De Jesus

Dewette Decker

Elizabeth Diaz

Karen Dockstader

Duana Draszkiewicz

Erick Druva

Reynand Dumala-On

Terry Dunbar

Juan Duran

K.C. Dutcher

Stephen Eiland

Mikiko Ellis

Diane Eriksson

Jerry Everhart

Melissa Fernandez

Edward Fernandez

Kyle Fiore

Lillian Fitzpatrick

Russell Fletcher

Geni Flores

Dr. Cheryl Ford

Angel Frausto

Susan Fule

Cathy Gaarden

Rosa Gallegos-Samora

Martha Gamboa

Harry Gantz

Bernice García-Baca

Anne Garland

Walter Gerstle

Thomas Gibbons

Henry Gonzales

Melinda González

Judith Gordon

Robert Grainger

David Greenberg

Richard Griego

Adam Gutierrez

Anni Hanna

Amanda Hatherly

Billie Helean

Benjamin Hernandez

Judy Herzl

Sara Hibner

Alicia Hicks

Laura J. Hobbs

Cheryl Holland

Sue Holland

Jenifer Hooten

Jessica Hudson

Cynthia Hull

Yazmin Izquierdo

Debaura James

Miranda Jeantete

Kathy Jenkins

James Jimenez

Patrícia Jimenez-Latham

Ann Jones

Mary Kamoss

Sharon King

Malva Knoll

Linda Knutson

Esther Kovari

Katie Lake

Chris Lopez

Josephine Lopez

Victor Lopez

Joe Dan Lovato

Phil Lucero

Kate MacDermott

Rudy Macias

Sandra Mack

Peter Madsen

Aviva Markowitz

Cathy Martin

Carmela Martinez

David Martinez

Holly Martinez

Lori Martinez

Rachel Martínez Powers

Bertha A. Martinez-Reyes

Holly Mata

Sally Maxwell

Kristine Mayle

Emily McCarthy

Ann McCartney

Duncan McGraw

Laura Medina

Andrew Melenchek

Robert Miera

Emma Mincks

Rose Mitchell

Mary Montoya

Isabel Morris

Cate Moses

Maureen Murphy

Jennifer Nane

Ivydel Natachu

Dair Obenshain

Dena Odell

Craig O'Hare

Nicole Olonovich

Edgar Orejel

Diana Orozco- Garrett

Jennifer Ortiz

Margaret Ortiz

Ramón Padilla

Theresa Palmer

Mary Parr-Sanchez

Francisco Patoni

Barbara Petersen

Giselle Piburn

Lexi Pickel

Matthias Pleil

J. Michele Ponce

Joanne Ponce

Ellen Pulido

Frances Ramirez-Maestas

John Reese

Sheryl Reese

Barbara Reider

Tim Richman

Erika Robers

Jamie Roberts

Agusta Rodriguez-Asi

Maria Rogahn

David Rogers

Carey Rojas

Cynthia Romero

Ryan Ross

Mayra Saenz

Jocelyn Salaz

Hilda Sanchez

Marva Sanchez

Adrian Sandoval

May Schaefer

Angela Schelton

Karen Schindwolf

Jillene Schmidt

Amy Schroth

Marlene K Schwalje

Jack Schwartz

Enrique Serrano

Fiana Shapiro

Kristen Simo

Michelle Skigen-Sarabia

Renae Smith

Thomas Solomon

Chris Speck

Rebecca Spencer

Jennifer StClair

Helen Stein

Genie Stevens

Margaret Stielow

Nicole Storm

Elsie Stott

Ruth Striegel

Michelle Tafoya

Teresa Tenorio

Camellia Termini

John Thayer

Liz Thomson

Deborah Trujillo

Jennifer Trujillo

Lorraine Upton

Christina Valentine

Amanda VanVeen

Mark Vasconcellos

Kay Vinson

Merry Wadsworth

Angie Walker

Christina Walseth

Tony Watkins

Margaret Watson

Karen Weber

Lisa Weinbaum

Gail Wheeler

Vicki Whitaker

Robin Wiener

Beverly Williams

Carol Williford

John Wills

Tracy Winslow

Valerie Wood

Ana Wooldridge

LaVerne Yazzie

Staff Reports
and New Mexico educators listed below