

UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



STEVAN PEARCE  
Second District, New Mexico

April 4, 2017

Amy Lueders  
New Mexico State Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
301 Dinosaur Trail  
Santa Fe, NM 87508

Director Lueders,

The New Mexico State Legislature recently brought to my attention that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has delayed an approximate \$69,900,000.00 payment to the State of New Mexico. This payment is the result of the \$145.6 million oil and gas lease sale made in Roswell, NM by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in September 2016. The attached letter from the Chairs of the Committees of jurisdiction outlines the impact this delayed payment may have on the state general fund reserves. Your office has communicated to my staff that the payment has been delayed due to the Wild Earth Guardians and the Center for Biological Diversity filing protests against the September lease sale.

New Mexico is currently facing difficult financial decisions and a delayed receipt of these funds would certainly make the situation worse. The New Mexico Constitution requires the State to end each fiscal year with a balanced budget, without this payment the State is projected to end the year with .4 percent reserves. This margin is extremely dangerous and risks a Constitutional violation should any factors change.

I request that the BLM complete responses to these protests as expeditiously as possible, and promptly provide payment to the State of New Mexico. I would also request that the BLM review its processes to reduce frivolous protests, which threaten to harm the State of New Mexico. We hope you can work through these protests before the end of the State's fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Steve Pearce  
Member of Congress