

# United States Senate

May 14, 2003

Mark Sardella, Director  
Local Energy  
P.O. Box 1300  
Santa Fe, NM 87574

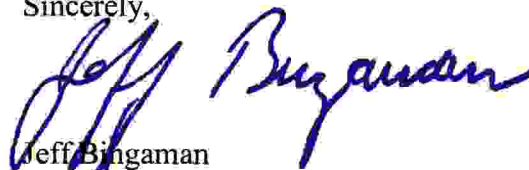
Dear Mr. Sardella:

The increase in natural gas prices over the past several years has made it more expensive to operate a business. Continued price hikes could threaten the entire Santa Fe business community. The natural gas reserves in the United State are at record low levels, and failure to adequately rebuild these stocks before next winter will result in supply shortfalls and record high prices in the next heating season.

My staff has spoken with a representative of Local Energy about the plan to develop a biomass-fired district heating system in Santa Fe. I support this effort as a means to supply clean, reliable, and affordable renewal energy to local residents and businesses, and to guard against the hardships that the natural gas crisis will bring. A biomass-fired district energy system in Santa Fe will also facilitate completion of forest thinning operation in the Santa Fe Watershed.

I look forward to working with Local Energy on this project.

Sincerely,

  
Jeff Bingaman  
United States Senator

JB/sps

**PLEASE REPLY TO:**

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