

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3101

May 15, 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

The increase in natural gas prices over the past several years has made it more expensive for businesses which, coupled with continued price hikes, could threaten the entire Santa Fe business community. I am aware that natural-gas reserves in the United States are at record low levels. Failure to adequately rebuild these stocks before next winter will result in supply shortfalls and record high prices in the next heating session.

Representatives of Local Energy, a Santa Fe-based non-profit, have informed me of their plan to develop a biomass-fired district heating system located in Santa Fe. This system will supply clean, reliable and affordable renewable energy to local residents and businesses and will guard against the hardship that the natural gas crisis will bring. A biomass-fired district energy system in Santa Fe will also facilitate completion of forest thinning operations in the Santa Fe Watershed.

Any assistance or consideration you may be able to provide would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Pete V. Domenici
United States Senate

PVD/mm

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