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## **NMPRC to host 3 new fellows as part of the federal Energy Innovator Fellowship program**

SANTA FE – For the next 12 months, the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC) will serve as a host institution for three new fellows as part of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Energy Innovator Fellowship (EIF) program. The new fellows are Kathleen Tepe, Claire Everett, and Anna Kalbas.

EIF program fellows are recent college graduates and early career professionals who have shown a strong interest in advancing energy solutions and policies to help ensure the grid is ready to accommodate new electric loads to promote economic development, and make the country's electrical grid more resilient, equitable, and affordable. Each fellow will spend at least a year with their host institution, where they are assigned to work under a staff member who'll provide mentorship and oversee project activities.

"The fellows come to the Public Regulation Commission with diverse and impressive backgrounds and interests to gain experience in energy and utility regulation," said **Commissioner Gabriel Aguilera**, who will serve as a fellowship mentor. "They bring new ideas and new energy to a field that is changing rapidly, and I look forward to seeing how they can help the Commission ensure that New Mexicans have access to affordable and reliable services."

At the NMPRC, each of the fellows will contribute to specific work that addresses emerging challenges in utility regulation, including rate design, time-of-use rates, grid modernization, and other priority issues to advance energy goals, including the following projects:

- **Advancing Affordable Energy Access for Economic Growth**, which will focus on analyzing energy affordability across New Mexico, developing regulatory strategies to maximize the benefits of grid modernization, and supporting Commission cases and stakeholder engagement to advance equitable, cost-effective, and resilient energy access.

- **Strengthening Grid Readiness for Economic Growth and Electrification**, which will focus on conducting load forecasting studies and work with the electric utilities to develop necessary resources to support increased electricity demand and electrification needs.
- **Establishing Wildfire Mitigation and Reporting Standards for Grid Resilience and Public Safety**, which will focus on electric utilities' wildfire risk and preparedness and gather commission staff, stakeholders, and the electric industry to develop wildfire mitigation plans that may include standards for equipment upgrades, vegetation management, and operational protocols.

In recent years, the EIF program has been instrumental in the NMPRC's efforts to ensure that the state's electric utilities provide residents with affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy. Past fellows have contributed to the agency's work in support of the state's community solar program, interconnection reforms, and resource planning.

More information about the Energy Innovator Fellowship program can be found [here](#).

*The New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (NMPRC) serves New Mexico by ensuring safe operations and reliable utility services at fair, just, and reasonable rates consistent with the State's legal, economic, environmental, and social policies. To learn more about the work of the NMPRC, please visit [www.prc.nm.gov](http://www.prc.nm.gov).*

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