

HB 37, as amended - Community Energy Efficiency Development (CEED) Block Grant Act

Sponsored by Rep. Kristina Ortez

HB37 – Community Energy Efficiency Development (CEED) Block Grant Act will improve utility affordability, reduce energy burden, and increase utility access of low-income New Mexicans. New Mexicans living in rural, low-income, and other underserved communities spend a high portion of their income on utility bills. On average, those living below the poverty line pay 15% of their income toward energy bills alone. Making energy efficiency improvements in low-income housing cuts energy bills for these New Mexicans, improves the quality of affordable housing stock, and will help New Mexico achieve its zero-carbon electricity target.

Unfortunately, New Mexico is behind other leading states when it comes to funding energy efficiency improvements for low-income households. 26 states provide at least double the amount of low-income efficiency investments per capita through state or utility funds. It's time for the State of New Mexico to invest in services to help low-income residents reduce their energy burdens while enabling the state to reach its climate goals.

The CEED Block Grant Act reduces energy burdens for low-income New Mexicans and enables the state to meet its climate goals:

- **Community Energy Efficiency Development (CEED) grant fund.**

The Community Efficient Energy Development (CEED) Block Grant provides funding for local communities to reduce energy burdens of low-income residents, creates jobs, and build capacity in communities that need it the most. This fund, established at EMNRD, will provide block grants to local and Tribal governments, and the Mortgage Finance Authority, to make targeted energy efficiency improvements in underserved communities in partnership with local community organizations. CEED complements existing federal, state, and utility efficiency programs and extends the number of New Mexicans living in poverty who receive assistance.

- CEED gives flexibility to local communities to determine what is needed most in their area. Each project can choose to focus on “low-hanging fruit” like replacing old, inefficient appliances or they offer more comprehensive retrofits of residences. CEED is a needed addition to the federally- and IOU-funded programs which are a “one size fits all” approach that provides whole house weatherization with cost-effectiveness restrictions.

CEED Act Supporters Include: *CAVU – Center for Civic Policy – Coalition of Sustainable Communities NM – CVNM – First Unitarian Earth Web, Albuquerque – Holy Cross Retreat Center, Mesilla – ICAST – Interfaith Power & Light – New Energy Economy – NM Café – New Mexico Conference of Churches – NM Environmental Public Health Network – NRDC – Office of Life, Peace, Justice & Creation, under the auspices of Catholic Charities of Gallup Diocese – Olé NM – Policy Solutions Institute – Prosperity Works – ReNew Mexico – Sierra Club – Southwest Conference United Church of Christ – Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Albuquerque – SWEEP – The Nature Conservancy – Valencia County Renewables – Voices for Children – WRA – Yucca*

New Mexicans below the federal poverty level pay an average of 15% of their income on energy bills. Those living in Catron, Guadalupe, Harding, Lincoln, Torrance, and Taos counties pay an average of 23% or more.

Data from Department of Energy Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool, <https://www.energy.gov/eere/slsc/maps/lead-tool>.

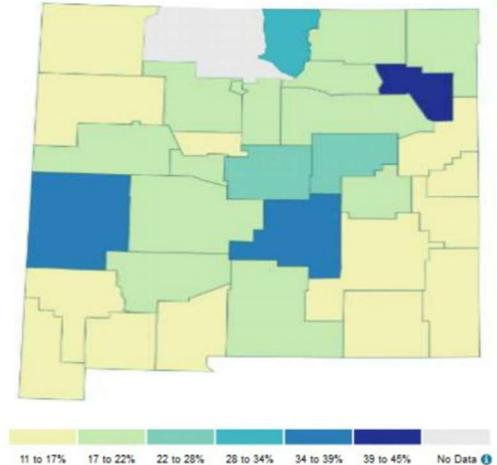


Figure: Energy burden (utility bills as a share of income) for those below poverty level



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