

Esperanza Chairez

Dear NMED staff,

My name is Esperanza Chairez, and I live in Las Cruces, NM. I am writing because I am concerned about the risks and harms Project Jupiter poses to my home. I am submitting this comment to urge the New Mexico Environment Department to reject Yucca Growth Infrastructure, LLC's air permit application for the YGI Microgrid in Doña Ana County.

As someone born and raised in Las Cruces, I am deeply concerned with the ways that Project Jupiter has rammed through our public democratic bodies, and is forcing itself onto my community here in Doña Ana county. I was opposed to the project's gas turbines before they abruptly changed their plans, and am still opposed to their proposed fuel cell "microgrid."

This new permit application still demonstrates a HUGE and concerning level of greenhouse gas emissions and toxic pollutants. Santa Teresa and our borderlands communities already experience a vulnerable air shed, with some days of horrible air quality and this project would only make our air worse. Isn't your mission "to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations" ? Granting these permit applications would be a direct contradiction to that mission. As a young person living in Las Cruces this proposed energy generation has paid no regard for present or future generations.

This technology generates toxic waste, and the process for handling this waste is still unclear! Bloom was fined for improper hazardous waste handling in Pennsylvania and Maryland. In 2020, Bloom was fined \$210,000, and then \$1,161,000. When I asked a Bloom employee about the toxic waste at a recent public event in Sunland Park, they were unable to answer my question as to where this waste would go and told me that it would simply go "to whoever can take it." This is unacceptable, and deeply alarming given that neither fuel cell technology nor their proposed "centralized" waste system has never occurred at this scale.

For these reasons and more, I urge the NMED to outright reject YUCCA Yucca Growth Infrastructure, LLC's air permit application for the YGI Microgrid. I ask the department to please hold a bilingual public hearing near the Santa Teresa community, so that local residents can learn about the potential dangers associated with fuel cell technology.

Respectfully,
Esperanza Chairez