

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sandy Long: The right choice for the future

Dear Editor,

Ark Valley Energy Future (AVEF) was formed by concerned SDCEA members two years ago, when SDCEA proposed a rate change that raised costs for low use members including low income, retired, workforce, and rooftop solar members, while rewarding high use and disincentivizing conservation. So many people spoke out against the rate proposal that SDCEA rescinded it. Since then, AVEF has worked to empower members so that they are not left behind in the energy transition.

The energy market is moving away from fossil fuels. Renewables like solar and wind are less expensive. But when the sun isn't shining and the wind doesn't blow, a base power source is needed to fill that gap. Tri-State, the parent co-op for SDCEA, plans to close coal plants and build utility-scale solar and wind projects. They will bridge the power gap with options like batteries and natural gas.

But Tri-State cannot do all the work for us. SDCEA needs to participate in this pivot by being more resourceful with our locally generated renewable power, building battery storage to protect reliability, and offering all members ways to manage their daily energy use.

That is why AVEF endorses Sandy Long for the SDCEA board. Sandy has the experience, education, and collaborative ability to bring bright ideas to these efforts. She supports Tri-State's move away from fossil fuels and encourages SDCEA to save money by lowering our peak power use. All together—with Tri-State, SDCEA, and Sandy on the board—we can responsibly move into the future.

Ark Valley Energy Future Directors

Rich Shoemaker, Deb Hannigan, Sue Greiner, Iris Herder, Karen Pate

Sandy Long for SDCEA Board

Dear Editor,

I am a member-owner in the Sangre de Cristo Electric Co-op, writing concerning the election for Board Members, which is now open. My purpose is to endorse the candidacy of Sandy Long, who has long been active in our community on SDCEA issues. I am voting for her. Having known Sandy for several years, I believe her to be a collaborative and responsible person who will carry out

the duties of a board member with skill and consideration for all viewpoints.

Along with her diligent attention to issues before the co-op (illustrated in part by her two years of attendance at public Board of Directors meetings as a member of the public), she also brings real world managerial experience in product and cost management, so she will be prepared to work on day one. My background is in physics, and I have been impressed with Sandy's willingness to get into technical details affecting energy generation and distribution.

The specific issues that concern me are the ability of members to control their own energy use and moving SDCEA toward a carbon-free future. I support both goals on principle, not from personal financial interest. I do not have solar panels, but support those who do. It would be short-sighted to target them in the charge structure in a way that discourages future solar investment. Lowering our energy costs goes well with local energy generation, as part of the path to a better future.

**Sincerely,
Kent S. Wood, Ph.D.
Nathrop**

Re: Sandy Long for SDCEA board

Dear Editor,

I want to urge all member-owners of the Sangre de Cristo Electric Association (SDCEA) to elect Sandy Long to represent us on the SDCEA board of directors on the ballot you should have recently received in the mail. You can also vote online if that is more convenient for you.

I live in Chaffee County and serve as one of three utility commissioners appointed by the Governor to the Colorado Public Utilities Commission. While we do not regulate the cooperatives of the state, I know I will be well served by Sandy representing me as a member-owner on the SDCEA Board.

I have gotten to know Sandy over the past four years and she has always impressed me with her thoughtful examination of the SDCEA policies. Just a couple of years ago, she did an in-depth evaluation of the SDCEA cost of service study and brought concerns to the board regarding the numerous assumptions in the study that worked to the detriment of cooperative members. She has been a consistent voice for cooperative members to keep electric bills affordable while advocating for local, clean energy generation. It's this kind of dogged determination, com-

mitment to excellence, and member services that we can use on the SDCEA board.

I know as a board member of SDCEA Sandy Long will be promoting transparency, public engagement, localized energy generation and affordable rates. I urge you to join me in supporting Sandy Long in the SDCEA board election.

**Tom Plant
Commissioner, Colorado PUC
Buena Vista**

Get out and vote

Dear Editor:

Our country's election system is exceptionally robust and there is no such thing as widespread voter fraud. Trump and his minions suffered a spectacular series of defeats after the 2020 election losing all of the approximately 60 lawsuits they filed alleging widespread voter fraud, because they couldn't come up with any evidence of such fraud. Additionally, all of their fatuous "audits" of state results turned up absolutely nothing indicating widespread voter fraud. The right wing's current infatuation with this subject is a hoax because it persistently ignores reality and pushes consistently disproven claims of voter fraud. The RNC's current "election integrity" focus is simply fake outrage

over a non-existent problem.

The Republican Party/right wing has long known that its policies are opposed by the majority of Americans. As a result, they have engaged in voter suppression for many decades through gerrymandering and laws designed to prevent American citizens from voting. Prominent Republicans, including Trump, have said publicly for many years that they don't want all American citizens to vote because if they do, Republicans won't get elected.

This current fake obsession with "election integrity" is simply an expansion of the Republican Party/right wing's historical attempts to manipulate the voting system so that a minority (conservatives) can dominate the government. Driven by Trump's infantile refusal to admit defeat, a trait nurtured by his mob lawyer mentor, Roy Cohn, this "election integrity" idiocy threatens the core of what our Founders created. We can't let that happen. Get out and vote!

**Eric Simons
Buena Vista**

Endorsing Sandy Long

Dear Editor:

I am writing to endorse Sandy Long for election to the Sangre de Cristo Electric Association board. Sandy has long advocated for clean ener-

gy and local energy opportunities and their potential in combatting climate change. I have enjoyed seeing her in action with the local Citizens' Climate Lobby and Ark Valley Energy Future, coordinating tech talks, gathering electric vehicles for car shows, helping organize community engagement sessions, and participating in Green Home tours.

Sandy brings an even-handed perspective to many discussions. Her education in engineering and business makes her knowledgeable, good with details, and fiscally wise. As a non-solar member of SDCEA, she offers valuable perspective to discussions about the future of net metering and the value of battery storage to benefit all members with locally generated electricity.

I am aware that Sandy's proactive attitude led her to attend SDCEA board meetings for most of the last two years and that she has taken the time to get to know the current board members and the staff at SDCEA.

I would like to see Sandy take on a more formal role with SDCEA so that we can continue to benefit from her clear and consistent efforts on behalf of our energy future. Please join me in voting for Sandy Long for the SDCEA board.

**Keith Baker
Buena Vista**

Graduation

Congratulations to the graduating seniors —
GIVE A SHOUT OUT TO THE CLASS OF 2024!

You did it!
LARGE AD \$50

congrats, grad!
SMALL AD \$35

Deadline to reserve space is **FRIDAY MAY 24, 2024**

The graduation souvenir issue will be published June 6, 2024

**Contact Michelle @ 719-838-0286
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