



TO: **House Bill Sponsors:** Karen McCormick and Lesley Smith  
**Senate Bill Sponsor:** William Lindstedt  
**Members of the Senate Committee on Transportation & Energy:**  
Senators: Lisa Cutter (Chair), Matt Ball (Vice Chair), Marc Catlin, Tony Exum,  
William Lindstedt, Kyle Mullica, Byron Pelton, and Tom Sullivan

FROM: The Colorado Renewable Energy Society (CRES)

DATE: March 30, 2026

RE: Vote for **HB26-1268 RENEWABLE ENERGY ON DISTURBED LANDS**  
Concerning measures to advance renewable energy projects on previously  
disturbed lands through the designation of renewable energy reinvestment areas.

After reviewing HB26-1268, the Colorado Renewable Energy Society (CRES) respectfully urges the Committee to vote for the bill. CRES strongly supports the intent of the legislation to promote the development of renewable energy projects on previously disturbed lands, recognizing this approach as an efficient and environmentally responsible pathway to accelerate clean energy deployment while minimizing impacts on undisturbed ecosystems and agricultural lands. Our Policy Committee includes members with direct experience developing photovoltaic projects on disturbed lands, and we appreciate the bill's effort to create a framework that facilitates such development.

However, to ensure clarity, consistency, and alignment with current statutory definitions governing renewable energy in Colorado, CRES recommends a targeted amendment to the definition of "renewable energy" found on page 5 starting on line, section (13)(a) of the current bill draft:

9 (13) (a) "RENEWABLE ENERGY" MEANS USEFUL ELECTRIC,  
10 THERMAL, OR MECHANICAL ENERGY:  
11 (I) THAT IS:  
12 (A) CONVERTED DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FROM RESOURCES OF  
13 CONTINUOUS ENERGY FLOW; OR

14 (B) PERPETUALLY REPLENISHED; AND

15 (II) THE UTILIZATION OF WHICH IS SUSTAINABLE INDEFINITELY.

16 (b) "RENEWABLE ENERGY" INCLUDES SOLAR, WIND, AND

17 GEOTHERMAL ENERGY.

Specifically, we advise removing the outdated (from 2007) definition currently referenced above that is found in the outdated CRS section 40-1-102 (11). In its place, we recommend adopting the definition of “Renewable Energy Resource” as set forth in SB26-102, which relies on the definition contained in CRS section 40-2-124 (1)(a)(VII):

**(VII)** “Renewable energy resources” means solar, wind, geothermal, biomass that is greenhouse gas neutral, new hydroelectricity with a nameplate rating of ten megawatts or less, and hydroelectricity in existence on January 1, 2005, with a nameplate rating of thirty megawatts or less and that does not require the construction of any new dams or reservoirs. Notwithstanding any other provision of this subsection (1)(a)(VII), a biomass electric generation facility that was in existence on or before January 1, 2021, or that has a nameplate rating of ten megawatts or less, shall be considered a renewable energy resource.

and also includes the definition of “Renewable Energy Storage”, which has the meaning set forth in section 40-2-124 (1)(a)(VII.5):

**(VII.5)** “Renewable energy storage” means an energy storage system, as defined in section 40-2-130 (2)(a), that stores energy produced only by renewable energy resources.

These updated definitions are clearer, reflect current legislative intent, and ensure consistency across related statutes and pending legislation. Aligning HB26-1268 with the definitions in SB 26-102 will reduce ambiguity, improve regulatory coherence, and better support the state’s broader clean energy goals.

Sincerely,

Vincent P. Calvano  
CRES Policy Committee  
Colorado Renewable Energy Society

About CRES:

CRES is a Colorado nonprofit corporation established in 1996. CRES creates environmental, social, and economic benefits for Colorado by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy of all types. CRES advocates for a carbon-neutral Colorado powered by 100% renewable energy, and is engaged in promoting energy efficiency, demand side management, beneficial

electrification, and the full breadth of renewable energy development in Colorado's communities. CRES also advocates for ways to achieve Colorado's emissions reduction targets.

CRES educates and assists the state's consumers, businesses and communities to advance renewable energy and energy efficiency in a manner that supports the economy and the environment.

CRES membership includes approximately 350 individual and business members interested in renewable energy and energy efficiency. The organization reaches more than 6,000 email subscribers and sponsors educational programs attended by hundreds.

CRES works on behalf of consumers, small businesses, and communities throughout the state to promote the expeditious transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

April 3, 2026

**RE: Support HB26-1268 Renewable Energy Development on Disturbed Lands**

Dear Chair Cutter and Members of the Senate Transportation & Energy Committee:

As part of Front Range Advocacy (FRA), a community organization dedicated to the needs of Front Range and gateway communities, I am writing to ask for your support for HB26-1268. Meeting the needs of the Green Transition requires addressing local government authority to reimagine land use of degraded and disturbed lands within their jurisdiction; and collaboratively with the local tribe of jurisdiction.

As you know, many communities in Colorado face lasting negative effects from degraded lands, such as natural resource pollution and displacement. These degraded lands are not fit for most redevelopment proposals because of lasting contamination and/or remediation costs. Concurrently, communities are looking for creative ways to site renewable energy and make further use of the land (e.g., co-location of solar panels and community gardens) because they too seek to conserve pristine open space for the well-being of community members. This bill presents new means to accelerate the reuse of unused, degraded lands and the adoption of renewable energy. This bill would authorize a “swap” of land use that addresses, in part, the deficits of degraded lands and the need to find locations for sustainable energy without disturbing ecosystems, watersheds, and agriculturally viable lands.

Although the Legislative Council Staff fiscal note affirms that this bill would not significantly increase State department workload, please consider meeting the future needs of departments to implement this legislation if the need arises. Reliable support for staff ensures low-cost and high-impact policies such as HB26-1268 achieve their full outcome efficacy.

Again, FRA urges you to vote yes on HB26-1268 to provide another tool in the toolbox of local governments seeking to repurpose degraded lands while participating in the Green Transition.

Sincerely,  
Cameron M. Gil  
[Front Range Advocacy](#)  
Founder



**Senate Transportation & Energy**

**04/06/2026**

**HB26-1268 Renewable Energy Development on Disturbed Lands**

**Typed Text of Testimony Submitted**

<b>Name, Position, Representing</b>	<b>Typed Text of Testimony</b>
Ingrid Moore  For  themselves	I strongly support this bill, representing myself.  Repurposing contaminated or previously disturbed lands will reduce environmental impact on pristine areas while creating economic opportunities through streamlined permitting and tax increment financing for necessary infrastructure.  Please vote yes to pass this bill!

# TESTIMONY FOR THE COLORADO SENATE TRANSPORTATION & ENERGY COMMITTEE

## Regarding House Bill 26-1268:

### Renewable Energy Development on Disturbed Lands

Matthew Popkin

City Councilmember, City of Longmont

Chair, Longmont Urban Renewal Authority

April 6, 2026

Good afternoon Chair Cutter, Vice Chair Ball, and members of the committee. I offer this testimony both as a Longmont City Councilmember and as Chair of Longmont's Urban Renewal Authority. I, along with the Longmont City Council, support this bill because it has potential to further our sustainability, energy, and land use goals.

Like most communities in Colorado, Longmont values our recreational, agricultural, and natural lands. And, like many communities in Colorado, we have multiple brownfields, closed landfills, mine lands, and oil and gas extraction sites.

HB1268 gives Colorado communities another tool to leverage should we want to welcome renewable energy projects to some of these sites.

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Cities and counties across the country are exploring whether they can reactivate closed landfills, former mining sites, and brownfields with renewable energy. Many communities of all shapes, sizes, and politics see this type of reuse as a common-sense approach. Yet, these communities consistently run into three challenges:

1. Projects that are on the fence financially, largely due to greater site and design complexity;
2. State and local processes that lack clarity or simply lack experience with this type of site reuse; and,
3. Inconsistent information or unknown questions about available electrical grid capacity and whether upgrades are needed.

Simply put, this bill aims to make these projects a little easier to plan and deploy where such projects are welcome.

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This bill enables local governments to designate specific areas as Renewable Energy Reinvestment Areas to leverage tax increment financing and complement sustainable growth goals for public and

private sites. This may be particularly useful for more remote sites like closed landfills and former mine lands that were not historically located next to today's urban renewal and county revitalization areas.

Importantly, tax increment financing, or "TIF", is not a new tax or fee, and it helps communities reinvest in public infrastructure improvements that support challenging redevelopment projects.

This bill also sends a market signal with the designation process, opt-in permitting improvements, and utility clarity without creating an unfunded mandate on communities.

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Our energy system has always required land — coal mines, hydroelectric dams, nuclear waste storage, oil and gas pipelines, and solar and wind farms— and land use often stirs community tensions. Encouraging renewable energy on disturbed lands is a smart and sustainable solution for communities to revitalize often-neglected sites while meeting growing energy demand.

This may seem niche, but it has broad potential with the U.S. EPA estimating that there are over 2,500 in Colorado alone that may be suitable for hosting renewable energy, create up to 44,000 construction jobs, and avoid siting energy projects on over 61,000 acres of greenfield areas in a state known for nature, recreation, and agriculture.

This bill won't achieve all these benefits on its own. But it does add another arrow in the quiver that may help renewable energy projects on brownfields that were on the fence now get across the finish line.

This isn't hypothetical either. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, over 624 renewable energy projects have been built on contaminated sites through 2024.

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Ultimately, I hope this committee and the state consider HB1268 a foundation for future policies to build on to further encourage and incentivize renewable energy projects on disturbed lands.

I appreciate the leadership of Representatives McCormick and Smith and Senator Lindstedt on this and urge you all to vote yes on this bill. Thank you.

Re: **HB26-1268 Renewable Energy Development** – April 6, 2026

To: Senate Sponsors William Lindstedt  
House Sponsors Karen McCormik Lesley Smith  
Senate Transportation & Energy Committee Members:  
Senators Lisa Cutter, Matt Ball, Mark Baisley, Marc Catlin, Tony Exum,  
William Lindstedt, Kyle Mullica, Byron Pelton, Tom Sullivan

Thank you for the good work towards reducing the pollution in our communities and towards meeting emission goals to reduce climate change impacts on our neighbors.

I advocate for the reduction of emissions that are causing our communities to be polluted in the vast Denver/Front Range Severe Ozone Pollution Area, and for the reduction of emissions from burning fossil fuels that cause climate change and contribute to the Severe Ozone Pollution.

**Background on the Severe Ozone Pollution - Denver/Front Range Non-Attainment area:**

- More air pollution affects more people and costs our communities – in 2022 the bad air we breathe went from ‘serious’ to ‘severe’ according to the EPA and the State Air Quality Control Commission (AQCC).
- About 4 million people live and breathe the pollution in the Severe Ozone non-attainment area – about 80% of states population - 9 counties including: Denver, Arapahoe, Jefferson, Adams, Douglas, Boulder, Broomfield, Larimer, Weld.
- This pollution causes breathing problems, asthma, lung damage, cardiac issues, heart attacks, and premature deaths, and represents a terrible cost to our communities.
  - Colorado Fiscal Institute (CFI) in the 2023 Clearing the Air Report estimated additional health related costs and lost workdays in Colorado to range \$480 million-\$1 billion per year.
  - CFI in the 2026 Colorado Climate Damages and Adaptation Cost Report estimated historical Colorado costs attributable to excess heat (1999-2024) to be about \$200 million per year and estimated future expected heat related climate attributable death costs to range from \$730 million to \$830 million per year.
  - CFI in their 2026 report estimated that future Colorado expected climate related costs to be roughly \$1.5 billion per year.

**As a private citizen I urge you to approve HB26-1268:**

1. Building renewable energy is less expensive for our communities, rate payers, and businesses.
2. Utilizing already disturbed lands to build renewable energy will create value for owners, businesses, and communities where a current liability exists.

Sincerely,

Ted Wells  
President ClimateUnified.org