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Chiricahua Community Health Centers Celebrates Four New Solar and Battery Projects, Strengthening Healthcare Resilience for Arizona Patients

DOUGLAS, AZ. — Today, Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. (Chiricahua), alongside Mayor Jose Grijalva, community leaders, funders, and project partners, celebrated the official activation of four new solar and storage microgrid systems that will help ensure uninterrupted access to healthcare services during power outages and emergencies.

The event, held during National Community Health Center Week, marked the culmination of a collaborative effort among Collective Energy, Invest in Our Future, BuildUS, and other community partners committed to strengthening healthcare infrastructure and improving community resilience. The project also took advantage of federal clean energy rebates.

The solar and battery microgrid system provides critical backup power capabilities that will help protect vaccine supplies, maintain electronic medical records, support virtual care services, and ensure patients continue receiving essential healthcare services when electrical service is disrupted.

“Running health centers in Douglas has often meant contending with power outages,” **said Chiricahua CEO Dr. Jonathan Melk.** “For many reasons, even brief power outages are not good for patient care. By installing powerful batteries powered by solar, Chiricahua is ensuring that patient care will be uninterrupted in our key Douglas facilities moving forward regardless of a passing storm or other challenges to the power grid that are out of our control.”

Melk’s comments reflect the peace of mind these projects bring to both patients and providers they support.

During the ceremony, project partners gathered for a symbolic switch-on event and discussed the importance of innovative partnerships that advance both community health and long-term resilience.

"The work happening at Chiricahua Community Health Centers in Douglas is more than a local success story, it's a model for communities across the country. BuildUS is proud to support partnerships that deliver resilience, cost savings, and lasting community benefits," said **Jill Fuglister, Executive Director of BuildUS**.

"Health centers shouldn't have to choose between keeping the lights on and caring for patients," said **Andrew MacCalla, Co-Founder and CEO of Collective Energy**. Solar and storage means the clinic doors stay open when the grid goes down — and every dollar saved on energy is a dollar that goes back to patient care. These projects are proof points that rural health centers can overcome the barriers of being at the end of the power grid, and we commend Chiricahua for serving as a model for others to follow."

The project serves as a model for how healthcare providers and community partners can work together to strengthen critical infrastructure, improve resilience in rural communities, and advance Chiricahua's vision of providing global health at home.

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About Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc.

Chiricahua Community Health Centers, Inc. (Chiricahua) is a Federally Qualified Health Center and nonprofit healthcare organization committed to its vision of Health for All. Since opening its first clinic in 1996, Chiricahua has worked to ensure that individuals and families across Cochise County have access to excellent healthcare close to home. Today, Chiricahua serves more than 35,000 patients each year through a network of medical, dental, behavioral health, and pharmacy clinics, as well as mobile health units that reach communities across southeastern Arizona.

About BuildUS

BuildUS is a national initiative focused on advancing a strong, clean, and equitable economy through strategic public investment. The organization brings together communities, workers, businesses, philanthropies, and policymakers to support projects that strengthen local economies and improve community preparedness. Through investments in clean energy, infrastructure, manufacturing, and workforce development, BuildUS helps communities access resources that create quality jobs and lasting public benefits. By supporting place-based partnerships, BuildUS works to ensure these investments deliver meaningful local impacts.

About Collective Energy

Collective Energy Company is a mission-driven solar-plus-storage microgrid developer that aims to provide clean energy access and resilience to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and community non-profits serving vulnerable populations. The company manages

the project development and financing process on behalf of non-profit organizations so they can have a trusted partner in the process and stay focused on providing quality care. Supported by prestigious social impact investors, as well as major national collaborators like the CHARGE partnership, Collective Energy continues to scale its impact across the U.S., building resilient systems, mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and reducing energy costs while reinforcing local healthcare and critical infrastructure.

About Invest in Our Future

Invest in Our Future (IOF) is a philanthropic organization dedicated to supporting the growth of clean energy projects nationwide. IOF works with partners across the country to address barriers to the clean energy transition, including financing, workforce development, and project implementation challenges. By supporting innovative organizations and projects, IOF helps advance affordable energy solutions, strengthen local economies, and ensure communities can benefit from a more dependable energy future.