

NMFAM Legislative Guide for SB18

Clear Horizons – A guide to voting NO

Included:

- Simplified Breakdown of the Billpg. 2
 - *A plain-language explanation of what the bill does, section by section, written to quickly clarify intent, scope, and real-world impact without legal jargon.*
- Messaging & Fact Tool (*Helpful to Legislators*).....pg. 4
 - *A comprehensive set of concise talking points paired with supporting data to equip legislators with clear, factual arguments addressing the economic, fiscal, workforce, agricultural, and fairness impacts of SB 18—designed for use in committee hearings, floor debate, and constituent conversations.*
- Likely Sponsor Arguments—& How to Respond (*for Legislators*).....pg. 10
 - *A brief overview of the most common arguments in opposition of the bill, along with concise, factual rebuttals legislators can use in debate or media interviews.*
- Messaging for Action Items & Socials.....pg. 14
 - *Ready-to-use language for action alerts, social media, and constituent outreach that clearly communicates the issue and drives timely engagement.*

SB 18—SIMPLIFIED BREAKDOWN OF THE BILL

Section 1 – Expanded Definitions (Foundation for Regulation)

SB 18 expands definitions such as greenhouse gas, fuel lifecycle, and statewide emissions to include not only in-state activity, but also emissions tied to fuel production, transportation, and electricity produced outside New Mexico but used here.

What this means for families:

This broad definition gives regulators sweeping authority over New Mexico’s energy sector, setting the stage for aggressive regulation of oil and gas—the industry that supports roughly 50% of the state budget and funds schools, healthcare, and public services families rely on.

Section 2 – Statewide Greenhouse Gas Limits (The Mandate)

SB 18 establishes legally binding emissions reduction targets of 45% by 2030, 75% by 2040, and 100% by 2050, with no exemption for New Mexico’s economy or energy dependence.

What this means for families:

Because oil and gas is the state’s largest emissions source, it becomes the primary target of these mandates—regardless of economic consequences—putting jobs, state revenue, and affordability at risk.

Section 3 – Expansion of Air Quality Law

The bill adds greenhouse gases to the Air Quality Control Act, allowing them to be regulated like traditional air pollutants.

What this means for families:

Oil and gas operations can now face new limits, penalties, and restrictions based on carbon output alone, increasing costs that ultimately ripple down to workers, consumers, and taxpayers.

Section 4 – New Regulatory Authority and Enforcement

SB 18 grants broad new powers to environmental regulators to design emissions plans, impose monitoring and reporting requirements, assess fees, and tighten regulations indefinitely.

- **Who is affected:**

Facilities emitting 10,000+ metric tons of greenhouse gases annually, or grouped operations emitting 25,000+ metric tons—capturing most oil and gas producers.

- **How it is enforced:**

Mandatory emissions monitoring (including methane), annual reporting, compliance mechanisms, offsets, and regulator-set fees.

What this means for families:

Compliance costs will disproportionately drive smaller producers out of business, eliminate high-wage jobs, reduce rural economic stability, raise energy prices, and shrink the tax base that funds schools and public services.

Bottom Line Summary

SB 18 centralizes regulatory power, mandates aggressive emissions reductions without economic safeguards, and places New Mexico families at risk by undermining the industry that funds half of the state budget.

SB 18 — Legislator Messaging & Fact Tool

Support to Vote NO on SB 18 (Clear Horizons)

1. SB 18 Threatens Half of New Mexico's State Budget

SB 18 directly threatens the industry that supports roughly 50% of New Mexico's state budget. That is not a marginal risk—it is a fiscal crisis in the making.

Facts to Support

- Oil and gas supports approximately half of New Mexico's state budget, including:
 - General fund revenue
 - Permanent fund contributions
 - Severance taxes and royalties
- These revenues fund:
 - K–12 and higher education
 - Medicaid
 - Public safety
 - Infrastructure and roads
- New Mexico is more dependent on oil and gas revenue than any other state.

Legislative takeaway:

If energy revenue declines, lawmakers must cut essential services or raise taxes on families.

2. SB 18 Risks Major Budget Instability

You cannot destabilize the industry funding half your budget and expect families, schools, or services to remain unaffected.

Facts to Support

- New Mexico lacks a diversified tax base.
- Even modest declines in production can result in hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenue.
- Budget instability impacts every future legislative session.

Legislative takeaway:

SB 18 introduces long-term fiscal uncertainty into state government.

3. SB 18 Will Cost Jobs—Especially in Rural New Mexico

SB 18 puts high-wage jobs at risk, particularly in rural communities where energy jobs sustain entire local economies.

Facts to Support

- Oil and gas supports tens of thousands of direct and indirect jobs statewide.
- Energy-sector wages are significantly higher than the state median, supporting families and small businesses.
- Rural counties such as Lea, Eddy, San Juan, and Chaves are especially vulnerable.

Legislative takeaway:

Job losses mean population decline, shrinking schools, and increased reliance on state assistance.

4. SB 18 Will Severely Impact Agriculture—Farmers and Ranchers Will Pay the Price

SB 18 will dramatically increase costs for farmers and ranchers, threatening New Mexico's agricultural economy and food security.

Facts to Support

- Agriculture depends heavily on affordable energy for:
 - Fuel for tractors, harvesters, and transport
 - Electricity for irrigation and cold storage
 - Natural gas-based fertilizers and inputs
- Increased energy costs raise:
 - Production expenses
 - Transportation and distribution costs
 - Consumer food prices
- Farmers and ranchers operate on thin margins and cannot absorb major cost increases.

Legislative takeaway:

SB 18 squeezes producers from both ends—higher costs and lower margins—putting family farms and ranches at risk.

5. SB 18 Mandates Emissions Reductions Without Protecting Jobs, Revenue, or Food Affordability

SB 18 mandates extreme emissions reductions with no requirement to protect jobs, state revenue, energy affordability, or food costs.

Facts to Support

- Required emissions reductions:
 - 45% by 2030
 - 75% by 2040
 - 100% by 2050
- The bill does not require regulators to:
 - Protect employment
 - Preserve state revenue
 - Ensure affordable energy for families or producers

Legislative takeaway:

This is a mandate-first policy with no economic guardrails.

6. Compliance Costs Will Push Smaller Producers Out—Shrinking the Tax Base

SB 18 favors large corporations while pushing smaller producers—and their jobs—out of New Mexico.

Facts to Support

- SB 18 requires:
 - Continuous emissions monitoring
 - Empirical methane measurement
 - Annual reporting and verification
- These are **high fixed costs**, regardless of company size.
- Smaller producers are less able to absorb compliance expenses.

Legislative takeaway:

Fewer producers means less production, fewer jobs, and less revenue for the state.

7. Families Will Pay More for Energy, Food, and Everyday Goods

SB 18 raises costs across the board—from fuel and electricity to groceries.

Facts to Support

- Reduced in-state energy production increases:
 - Fuel and diesel prices
 - Electricity rates
 - Transportation costs
- Higher energy costs flow directly into:
 - Food prices
 - Housing costs
 - Consumer goods

Legislative takeaway:

SB 18 is regressive and disproportionately harms low-income and rural families.

8. SB 18 Is Fundamentally Unfair and Unevenly Applied

SB 18 imposes strict regulations on some producers while explicitly exempting others—creating an uneven and unfair regulatory landscape.

Facts to Support

- SB 18 excludes oil and gas sources located on Native American reservation lands from greenhouse gas emissions limits.
- Non-reservation producers must comply with:
 - Costly regulations
 - Monitoring and reporting requirements
 - Enforcement penalties
- This creates unequal treatment among producers operating in the same state and markets.

Legislative takeaway:

Unfair regulations distort markets, disadvantage certain workers and communities, and undermine confidence in state policy.

9. SB 18 Exports Emissions While Importing Energy

SB 18 does not reduce global emissions—it shifts production elsewhere.

Facts to Support

- Energy demand does not disappear.
- Reduced New Mexico production shifts supply to:
 - Other states
 - Foreign producers with weaker environmental standards
- This results in carbon leakage, not real climate benefit.

Legislative takeaway:

New Mexico loses jobs and revenue while emissions continue elsewhere.

10. Unelected Boards Gain Sweeping Authority Over the State's Economy

SB 18 hands enormous economic authority to unelected boards with little legislative oversight.

Facts to Support

- The Environmental Improvement Board may:
 - Set emissions limits
 - Impose fees
 - Expand regulations indefinitely
- The Legislature retains limited direct oversight once authority is delegated.

Legislative takeaway:

This weakens accountability to voters, workers, and communities.

11. New Mexico Is Already Reducing Emissions—Without Sacrificing Families or Agriculture

New Mexico is already reducing emissions without risking jobs, agriculture, or half its budget.

Facts to Support

- Existing methane regulations already in place
- Continued technological improvements reducing emissions intensity
- Federal and state rules already address emissions

Legislative takeaway:

SB 18 is duplicative, punitive, and economically reckless.

Closing Statement for Legislators

New Mexico can care for the environment without sacrificing half its budget, rural jobs, agriculture, or fairness.

SB 18 raises costs for families and farmers, destabilizes public services, and applies rules unevenly.

For working families, ranchers, and communities across our state, SB 18 deserves a NO vote.

Quick One-Line Floor & Media Responses

“You don’t destabilize half your budget and call it responsible policy.”

“This bill raises costs on farmers, families, and rural communities.”

“Uneven rules create unfair markets and lost jobs.”

“SB 18 risks food prices, fuel prices, and school funding.”

Likely Sponsor Arguments & How to Respond

SB 18 (Clear Horizons)

Prepared for legislators opposing SB 18

Argument 1: “SB 18 is necessary to address climate change.”

Response

New Mexico is already reducing emissions under existing state and federal rules, particularly through methane regulations and improved technology. SB 18 duplicates these efforts while imposing rigid mandates that ignore economic realities, risking jobs, agriculture, and public services without guaranteeing meaningful global emissions reductions.

Key Point:

Environmental progress does not require destabilizing half of the state’s budget.

Argument 2: “The bill allows flexibility through offsets and emissions trading.”

Response

Offsets and trading mechanisms increase costs and complexity, favoring large corporations while pushing smaller producers—and their employees—out of the market. These systems do not protect jobs, rural economies, or state revenue and often result in emissions being shifted elsewhere rather than reduced.

Key Point:

“Flexibility” in the bill still comes with significant compliance costs that families ultimately pay.

Argument 3: “Oil and gas companies can afford to comply.”

Response

SB 18 does not regulate “companies” in the abstract—it impacts workers, communities, farmers, and state revenue. Smaller and mid-sized producers lack the capital to absorb continuous monitoring, reporting, and compliance costs, leading to job losses, reduced production, and shrinking tax revenue.

Key Point:

When producers leave, families lose jobs and the state loses funding for schools and healthcare.

Argument 4: “This bill protects public health and communities.”

Response

Public health is already addressed through existing air quality and methane regulations. SB 18 goes further by regulating carbon output without requiring regulators to consider affordability, employment, or food costs—placing additional strain on families and rural communities.

Key Point:

Policies that raise energy and food costs can harm the very communities they claim to protect.

Argument 5: “New Mexico must lead on climate policy.”

Response

Leadership should be measured by outcomes, not mandates. SB 18 risks exporting energy production to other states and countries with weaker environmental standards, resulting in carbon leakage while New Mexico loses jobs and revenue.

Key Point:

True leadership balances environmental stewardship with economic responsibility.

Argument 6: “The bill includes safeguards and regular reporting.”

Response

Reporting requirements do not protect families from higher costs, job losses, or reduced school funding. Annual reports and regulatory reviews do not prevent the real-world consequences of aggressive mandates imposed without economic guardrails.

Key Point:

Documentation does not equal protection.

Argument 7: “SB 18 does not directly shut down oil and gas production.”

Response

While the bill does not explicitly ban production, it creates a regulatory environment that makes continued operation increasingly difficult and expensive—especially for smaller producers. The result is the same: reduced production, lost jobs, and declining revenue.

Key Point:

Indirect shutdowns still shut people out of work.

Argument 8: “The bill is fair and inclusive.”

Response

SB 18 applies unevenly by exempting oil and gas operations on Native American reservation lands while imposing strict mandates elsewhere. This creates an uneven regulatory landscape that disadvantages certain workers, communities, and producers operating in the same markets.

Key Point:

Unequal rules undermine fairness, confidence, and economic stability.

Argument 9: “Delaying action will cost more in the long run.”

Response

Rushed mandates without economic safeguards create immediate and lasting harm to families, farmers, and public services. Responsible policy should build on existing progress while protecting affordability, jobs, and state revenue.

Key Point:

Reckless action is not the same as responsible action.

Closing Guidance for Legislators

When responding to SB 18 supporters, keep the focus on:

- Families
- Jobs
- Agriculture
- Affordability
- Fairness

- Fiscal responsibility

Suggested framing line:


“We can care about the environment without sacrificing families, farmers, and the services New Mexicans rely on.”

CALL TO ACTION CONTENT

SB 18 (Clear Horizons)

Primary Action Page CTA

Headline


 Protect New Mexico Families — Vote NO on SB 18

Action Page Description

SB 18 threatens New Mexico’s economic stability by targeting the oil and gas industry that supports roughly 50% of our state budget—funding schools, healthcare, public safety, and infrastructure. The bill mandates aggressive emissions reductions without protecting jobs, agriculture, or energy affordability, while giving unelected boards sweeping regulatory authority.

If SB 18 moves forward, families will face higher energy and food costs, rural communities will lose high-wage jobs, and lawmakers will be left with fewer resources to fund essential services.

Action Instruction

 Tell your legislator to vote NO on SB 18.


Protect families. Protect farmers. Protect New Mexico’s future.

Primary Button Options

 Vote NO on SB 18

 Protect NM Families

 Stand with Farmers & Ranchers

 Contact Your Legislator Now

SOCIAL MEDIA CTA OPTIONS

Option 1: Strong & Direct (Best Overall Use)

 Action Alert: Vote NO on SB 18

SB 18 puts New Mexico families at risk by targeting the industry that supports 50% of our state budget—funding schools, healthcare, and public safety. It raises costs for families and farmers while giving unelected boards sweeping control.

👉 Take action today. Tell legislators to vote NO on SB 18.

Option 2: Family & Cost-of-Living Focus

New Mexico families are already stretched thin.

SB 18 would raise energy and food costs, eliminate high-wage jobs, and threaten funding for schools and essential services.

👉 Speak up now—tell your legislator to vote NO on SB 18.

Option 3: Agriculture-Focused CTA

🚜 Farmers and ranchers can't afford SB 18.

This bill drives up fuel, electricity, and fertilizer costs—threatening family farms, food affordability, and rural communities.

👉 Stand with agriculture. Vote NO on SB 18.

Option 4: Fairness & Accountability Angle

SB 18 applies costly mandates unevenly—burdening some communities while exempting others—and hands sweeping authority to unelected boards.

👉 Demand fair, accountable policy. Tell legislators to vote NO on SB 18.

Option 5: Short & Punchy (Great for Graphics/Reels)

SB 18 =

✗ Higher costs

✗ Lost jobs


✗ Risk to schools & families

👉 Vote NO on SB 18. Take action now.

Option 6: Comment-to-Engage CTA

SB 18 puts families, farmers, and rural communities at risk.

 Comment NO ON SB 18

 Then click the link to contact your legislator today.

Suggested Hashtags (Optional)

#VoteNoSB18 #ProtectNMFamilies #NMFarmers #NMEconomy #StopSB18 #FamiliesFirstNM