



Lori Saine Testimony for HB303

My name is **Lori Saine**. I am a former Colorado State Representative, former Weld County Commissioner, and today I represent **American Power Play**.

I advanced a model policy approved by the **American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC)** that supports **community energy and agrivoltaics** as part of the solution for American energy independence and greater competition in the energy market.

ALEC is the only organization of lawmakers dedicated to the Jeffersonian values of **limited government, free markets, and federalism**—and its endorsement of community energy is a milestone worth noting.

Colorado has one of the longest-running community energy programs in the nation. In Eastern Colorado, I've seen firsthand how **small-scale solar projects—five megawatts or less—have breathed new life into our rural communities**.

Weld County, home to one of the nation's most productive oil and gas basins, has also embraced community energy. For farmers and ranchers, these projects provide a critical lifeline during volatile crop markets and rising input costs.

Our rural producers feed Colorado and the world. Weld County ranks among the top ten agricultural counties in America. Yet our rural culture is fading as older generations age out and younger families struggle to afford land and withstand the risks of farming. Community energy offers a solution—**20 to 40 years of stable, passive income that helps keep family farms alive**.

With new tariffs, reduced subsidies, and federal hostility toward ethanol, farmers need a **free-market source of income** more than ever. Community energy provides that—**without replacing farming**. Projects are sited on less-productive ground or on conjunctive sites. In Colorado, solar panels are already sharing space with wheat, alfalfa, and livestock.

Solar arrays can even benefit animal health, offering shade to feedlots, hog farms, and cattle operations. And with today's technology—drip tape irrigation, robotic tractors, drones—**the future of farming is inseparable from energy innovation.**

Community energy strengthens rural economies in three ways:

- It creates long-term income for farming and ranching families.
- It provides **competition in the energy market**, helping drive down power bills.
- It delivers **private investment and local tax revenue** to support schools, emergency services, and infrastructure.

These distributed projects pay their own way—covering interconnection and grid upgrades—while delivering power closest to where it's consumed. That matters in rural areas where line extension costs are high.

As rural America ages, our emergency services are stretched thin. Community energy provides new tax revenues to keep those services funded. Most importantly, **it delivers lower energy bills for working families and jobs close to home.**

Distributed community energy is an important piece of an “all of the above” energy future—**oil, gas, renewables, and agriculture working together.**

A pilot project for community energy will prove what consumers have been experiencing--lower prices and more savings for their families, and more income for their communities.

Thank you for your consideration. I'd be glad to answer any questions.

About the Speaker: Lori Saine is a national policy leader who brings over 15 years of policy development, fiscal analysis, operations management, and process optimization at the federal, state, and local levels. Lori works as a consultant with American Power Play, an organization dedicated to American energy and infrastructure dominance. Lori Saine served as a Colorado State Legislator, and as a County Commissioner by representing Weld County, a top national producer of agricultural products, oil and gas, and renewable energy. Saine was consistently recognized by awards from conservative organizations like Principles of Liberty, Republican Liberty Caucus, and the American Conservative Union. Saine served in leadership positions as the Republican House Caucus Chair, Legislative Audit Committee Chair, American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) Board member, and Chair of the American City County Exchange (ACCE). Saine recently passed national model policy with ACCE and ALEC advocating small community energy and agrivoltaics projects, protecting Consumer's Right to Choose Natural Gas, and many others.

AMERICAN
POWER PLAY