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AACC Represents Nearly 1,200 Community Colleges, 15 in New Mexico

Washington, DC – The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) has announced their support for Rep. Luján's Community College Energy Training Act of 2009, which will encourage the training of technicians to work in the wind, solar, geothermal and biomass energy sectors. The bill also will cover other energy-related occupations, including energy-efficient construction and retrofitting, recycling and waste reduction, water and energy conservation, and sustainable agriculture. The legislation currently has over 50 cosponsors.

"The Community College Energy Training Act of 2009 will give community colleges and students the opportunity to lead in a clean energy economy and grow a skilled workforce that can help make the United States a leader in clean energy production," said Rep. Luján. "I would like to thank the American Association of Community Colleges for their support of this legislation and these important goals."

"This legislation supports critical education and training programs for sustainable energy at

community colleges across the country,” said George R. Boggs, President and CEO of the AACC. “As the demand for alternative and renewable energy increases, the need for more skilled workers grows. Community colleges produce highly qualified energy technicians that help with the fabrication, installation, and maintenance of wind turbines, solar panels, and other key elements needed for wind, solar, geothermal, and biomass energy. The colleges also educate and train individuals for numerous other industries, including ‘green jobs’ in energy efficient construction, energy audits, nanotechnology, water conservation, and sustainable agriculture. AACC strongly supports Representative Luján’s proposed sustainability energy training program for community colleges.”

The Community College Energy Training Act of 2009 will establish grants to community colleges to be awarded by the Secretary of Energy in collaboration with the Secretary of Labor for training in these various fields.

Fifty percent of the annual \$100 million authorization will be used to create community college programs that focus on the inherent renewable resource industries in a given region. This will allow students to train at community colleges in the fields most likely to affect where they live. The other 50 percent will go to boost and upgrade existing programs throughout the country that are already providing this type of job-training and education.