United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 13, 2026

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Constantyn Gieskes
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Dear Mr. Franklin and Mr. Gieskes:

I write to request information about Pacifico Energy Group's plans to power a campus of hyperscale data centers in Pecos County, TX, with a massive complex of new gas-fired power plants. At 7.65 gigawatts, the planned GW Ranch Project—a private-grid power generation campus[1]—is slated to be, in the words of Mr. Gieskes, "the largest power project in the United States."[2] The GW Ranch Project would also be the country's largest air polluter—a fact that the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) acknowledged last week when it issued Pacifico Energy Group the United States' largest air pollution permit.[3] The TCEQ permit authorizes (i) 12,000 tons per year of dangerous health-harming pollutants including soot, ammonia, carbon monoxide, and volatile organic compounds;[4] and (ii) 33 *million* tons per year of climate-warming greenhouse gases.[5]

It's well established that climate upheaval and huge economic impacts will result if we fail to limit global temperature increase to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial

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[1] "Behind the meter" power projects like the GW Ranch Project allow customers like the data centers at issue here to plug in directly to a power source without paying in to the grid. A new report from Cleanview found that 30% of all planned data center capacity in the country are set to be behind-the-meter. *See* Christa Marshall, "Data centers increasingly turn to off-grid gas", *E&E News* (Feb. 5, 2026), https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2026/02/05/data-centers-increasingly-turn-to-off-grid-gas-00766275 (citing Michael Thomas, "Bypassing the Grid: How Data Centers Are Building Their Own Power Plants", Cleanview, https://cleanview.co/content/power-strategies-report).

[2] "Pacifico Energy Secures 7.65 GW Power Generation Permit for GW Ranch Project", *Business Wire* (Jan. 26, 2026), https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260126236053/en/Pacifico-Energy-Secures-7.65-GW-Power-Generation-Permit-for-GW-Ranch-Project.

[3] Dylan Baddour, "In the West Texas Oil Patch, Companies Plan Gas Power Plants to Run New Data Centers", *The Texas Tribune* (Feb. 2, 2026), https://www.texastribune.org/2026/02/02/texas-permian-basin-power-plant-project-data-centers/.

[4] These pollutants cause, among other impacts, heart attacks, asthma, strokes, reproductive issues, chemical burns, cancer, and premature death. *See*, *e.g.*, Environmental Protection Agency, "Health and Environmental Effects of Particulate Matter (PM)" (May 23, 2025), https://perma.cc/T58A-748U; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Ammonia: Chemical Fact Sheet" (Sep. 6, 2024), https://www.cdc.gov/chemical-emergencies/chemical-fact-sheets/ammonia.html; U.S. EPA, "Basic Information about Carbon Monoxide (CO) Outdoor Air Pollution", https://www.epa.gov/co-pollution/basic-information-about-carbon-monoxide-co-outdoor-air-pollution; American Lung Association, "Volatile Organic Compounds", https://www.lung.org/clean-air/indoor-air/indoor-air-pollutants/volatile-organic-compounds.

[5] "Pacifico Energy Secures 7.65 GW Power Generation Permit for GW Ranch Project", *Business Wire* (Jan. 26, 2026), https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20260126236053/en/Pacifico-Energy-Secures-7.65-GW-Power-Generation-Permit-for-GW-Ranch-Project.

levels.[6] That requires reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45% by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050,[7] which in turns means that advanced economies' energy sectors must achieve overall net-zero emissions by 2035.[8] Pacifico itself declares that it is the company's "goal . . . to reduce the carbon footprint and let countries meet their COP26/27 objectives."[9]

Pacifico's actions seem inconsistent with these claimed goals. In order to meet the IPCC's directive of a net-zero world by 2050, and limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C, advanced economies' energy sectors must achieve overall net-zero emissions by 2035.[10]

In that light, I am interested in your consideration of measures to capture or offset gas plant emissions while sourcing lower carbon-intensity natural gas; or to rely more heavily on renewable energy, given solar and wind are the cheapest and most abundant sources of energy available today.[11] Renewables can also be coupled with energy storage systems, whose costs have dropped significantly in recent years and are continuing to fall.[12]

Other large hyperscale projects have invested in renewable options like these as well as in nuclear energy.[13] And other gas projects are implementing 90 percent carbon capture, a proven and scalable approach to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions from fossil-powered projects.[14] Meanwhile, some gas suppliers are using new technologies and methods to find and

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[6] United Nations, Climate Action: "For a livable climate: Net-zero commitments must be backed by credible action", https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/net-zero-coalition.

[7] *Id.*

[8] *See generally* the International Energy Agency's comprehensive study finding that in order to achieve a net zero world by 2050, advanced economies must achieve overall net-zero emissions in their electricity sectors. International Energy Agency, "Net Zero by 2025: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector", IEA (Oct. 2021), https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/deebef5d-0c34-4539-9d0c-10b13d840027/NetZeroby2050-ARoadmapfortheGlobalEnergySector_CORR.pdf at 20.

[9] Pacifico Energy Group, Home (accessed Feb. 2, 2026), https://pacificoenergygroup.com/ https://perma.cc/LM52-JB66.

[10] *See generally* the International Energy Agency's comprehensive study finding that in order to achieve a net zero world by 2050, advanced economies must achieve overall net-zero emissions in their electricity sectors. International Energy Agency, "Net Zero by 2025: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector", IEA (Oct. 2021), https://iea.blob.core.windows.net/assets/deebef5d-0c34-4539-9d0c-10b13d840027/NetZeroby2050-ARoadmapfortheGlobalEnergySector_CORR.pdf at 20.

[11] United Nations, "Renewables: Cheapest form of power" (July 19, 2022), https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/renewables-cheapest-form-power; "Renewable energy remains cheapest power builds as new gas plants get pricier", *Reuters* (June 16, 2025), https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/renewable-energy-remains-cheapest-power-builds-new-gas-plants-get-pricier-2025-06-16/.

[12] Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, "Electric Energy Storage", https://www.c2es.org/content/electric-energy-storage/.

[13] *See, e.g.*, "Power Hungry Data Centers Are Driving Green Energy Demand", *Bloomberg NEF* (Aug. 26, 2025), https://about.bnef.com/insights/clean-energy/power-hungry-data-centers-are-driving-green-energy-demand/; Jeffrey Tomich, "Google, Xcel pitch large-scale renewables for data center", *E&E Energywire* (Feb. 25, 2026), https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/eenews/2026/02/25/google-xcel-pitch-large-scale-renewables-for-data-center-00795911.

[14] Dominic Genetti, "2025: Taking carbon capture and storage from momentum to impact", ExxonMobil (Jan. 26, 2026), https://corporate.exxonmobil.com/news/viewpoints/2025-taking-carbon-capture-and-storage-from-momentum-to-impact; Mathilde Fajardy, Carl Greenfield, and Josephine Tweneboah Koduah, "CCUS projects around the world are reaching new milestones", International Energy Agency (Apr. 30, 2025), https://www.iea.org/commentaries/ccus-projects-around-the-world-are-reaching-new-milestones.

stop methane leaks, vents, and releases. These suppliers may be certified by third parties or willing to provide an accounting of their embedded emissions intensity.

To help us better understand your decision-making process and plans related to the GW Ranch Project, please provide responses to the following interrogatories and document requests by March 27, 2026:

1. Your website states that you plan to integrate 7.65GW of gas with 1.8GW of battery storage and "up to" 750MW of solar. How much solar do you plan to build? Why did you decide to power 7.65GW of energy infrastructure with gas—more than ten times your maximum projected solar capacity—despite the demonstrated availability of solar and storage, as well as wind and nuclear power? Please explain in detail the procedural and substantive reasons behind your company's decision.

2. Are you planning to implement 90 percent carbon capture at the GW Ranch Project, or otherwise reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 88.4% by 2032 as required under existing law? Are you planning to implement any carbon capture? If yes, what percent of total carbon emissions do you plan to capture?

3. Do you plan to trace your natural gas supply purchases according to the suppliers' actual emissions intensity? Will you commit to working with certified gas suppliers to manage and reduce their methane leaks, vents, and releases?

4. Do you have plans in place to offset your greenhouse gas emissions, including the embedded emissions associated with the fuel you purchase? If yes, please describe in detail. If not, why not?

5. Did you conduct or commission any analyses, data, or calculations to assess whether the new gas plants realized through your plans align with your company's "goal . . . to reduce the carbon footprint and let countries meet their COP26/27 objectives"? If yes, please produce all relevant documents. If not, why not?

6. Have you confirmed data center partners? If so, please provide their names.

7. Reporting suggests that hyperscale data center operators often experience significant rates of return on investment.[15] If you have secured data center partners: are you aware of their expected return on this project? If so, please disclose.

Sincerely,

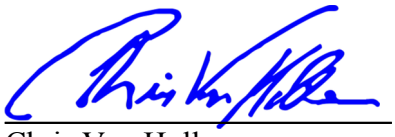
[15] Software company Accordant reported in July of last year that internal rates of return for "ground-up hyperscale projects [were] tracking between 25 percent and 40 percent over three-to four-year hold periods." Accordant, "Numbers Supporting 30%+ IRR Returns in Hyperscale Data Center Development", (July 3, 2025), https://www.accordantinvestments.com/blog/the-numbers-supporting-30-irr-returns-in-hyperscale-data-center-development#:~:text=*30%25+%20IRR%20Returns%E2%80%9D%20refers,8.



Sheldon Whitehouse
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