Contact: Bruce Krasnow
Bruce.Krasnow@edd.nm.gov
(505) 795-0119

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham
Acting Cabinet Secretary Mark Roper

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Second New Mexico-Based Facility Awarded CHIPS Funding

New investment in Rocket Lab will expand statewide partnerships, create 140 high-paying jobs

SANTA FE, N.M. – New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) Acting Cabinet Secretary Mark Roper said that today's announcement by the White House of another award to a New Mexico company under the CHIPS and Science Act solidifies New Mexico as a center for advanced manufacturing.

The $23.9 million award to Albuquerque's Rocket Lab, formerly SolAero, will significantly increase its satellite solar power production over the next four years and provide up to 140 additional jobs in New Mexico. The company will invest more than $70 million of private money into the expansion and $25 million in financial assistance and incentives from the State of New Mexico.

"New Mexico's space economy is growing every day, and Rocket Lab's expansion will bring more than 100 new jobs. This is just the latest example of how the CHIPS and Science Act is fueling new technology and high-wage jobs in New Mexico," Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham said.

Two of the 10 awards under CHIPS are going to expand facilities in New Mexico as Intel's manufacturing plant in Sandoval County has also been approved for CHIPS funding.

Intel's award will support the modernization of two semiconductor production facilities into advanced packaging facilities to close an important gap in the domestic semiconductor supply chain. Once in full production, this will be the largest advanced packaging facility in the United States, re-establishing American leadership in semiconductor manufacturing.

In April 2024, New Mexico ranked 5th in the nation for the year-over-year growth of manufacturing jobs.

"With the focused economic leadership of Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, New Mexico is seeing strong job growth in the high-paying manufacturing and technology sectors. We are getting national recognition as companies here grow with solid long-term state and community partnerships," EDD Acting Cabinet Secretary Roper said.

"Rocket Lab's expansion in New Mexico underscores the strength of the state's dynamic aerospace industry and the importance of state support for its continued growth," EDD's Office of Strategy, Science & Technology Director Nora Meyers Sackett said. "EDD's target sectors in science and technology have an average wage 57% higher than the state's average wage across all sectors. It's essential that the state continue to focus on industries with high wages as we raise per capita income and improve the quality of life for New Mexico families."

Rocket Lab is the world's market share leader in satellite and spacecraft solar power solutions, delivering

~500,000 Watts/year of power to orbit. The space-grade solar cells produced in Albuquerque power critical satellites for early missile warning and exploratory science, including the James Webb Space Telescope, the Artemis program's Orion Crew Capsule and Lunar Gateway, Ingenuity Mars Helicopter, and the Mars Insight Lander.

Under the CHIPS agreement, Rocket Lab will partner with New Space New Mexico (NSNM), a nonprofit founded to accelerate innovation in New Mexico alongside government, academic, and private stakeholders. As part of this partnership, Rocket Lab will contribute $2 million over the next three years, allow access to their equipment, services, and personnel, and sponsor internship positions to advance the NewSpace Ignitor and Pathways to the Stars programs—two core initiatives of the NSNM program.

NewSpace Ignitor will establish co-innovation hubs in Albuquerque, Navajo Nation, and rural southern New Mexico to provide opportunities and promote high-tech manufacturing in underserved communities.

CHIPS for America is part of President Biden's economic plan to invest in America, stimulate private sector investment, create good-paying jobs, manufacture more in the United States, and revitalize communities left behind. Visit www.chips.gov to learn more.

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EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by training our workforce, providing infrastructure that supports business growth, and helping every community create a thriving economy.

New Mexico Economic Development Department
EDD.NewMexico.gov

New Mexico Economic Development Department | 1100 South St. Francis Dr Joseph M. Montoya Building | Santa Fe, NM 87505-4147 US

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