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*Comment Received From: Mercy Pena  
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## **support for continuing to develop the lithium industry**

Dear Blue Ribbon Commission:

I am reaching out to share my support for continuing to develop the lithium industry in Imperial County and the positive interactions I have had with lithium producers to date.

As we know, projects with impacts that go beyond just the environment or economy will not be successful without the buy in from one very important party, our community. So far, I have been encouraged by the outreach, materials, resources and calls I have received from the local lithium industry and look forward to continued engagement.

I too want to see engagement when it comes to the continued development of this unique industry. However, community outreach should not be mandated as a prerequisite to greenlighting a project with many tremendous benefits.

The lithium industry is in a critical spot when it comes to Imperial County's future, having the ability to provide hundreds of jobs, millions in tax revenue and tens of millions in economic activity, while at the same time helping to fuel our clean energy future.

Let's continue to work together to improve these projects, finding the best path forward that balances the desire for community inclusivity and support, yet also considering the overarching positive impacts projects like these can have on Imperial Valley and generations to come.