



U.S. REPRESENTATIVE

RAUL  RUIZ M.D.

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RUIZ URGES ENERGY SECRETARY TO INVEST IN CLEAN ENERGY JOBS AT THE SALTON SEA

May 5, 2021 | Press Release

The American Jobs Plan will help make Southern California a global leader in clean energy and lithium battery technology

Palm Desert, CA – This week, Congressman Raul Ruiz, M.D. (CA-36) met with Department of Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm to chart a path forward to develop the lithium deposits underneath the Salton Sea to make Riverside and Imperial Counties global leaders in clean-energy battery technology. The Department of Energy supports American researchers who are developing the technologies to extract lithium from the geothermal brine that is currently used for power production near the Salton Sea. President Biden's American Jobs Plan will bolster this work with critical investments in clean energy research and manufacturing.

As part of this significant investment in the development of local lithium resources, Dr. Ruiz stressed the importance of returning economic benefits to the local community. Major national investments in the region would contribute to infrastructure improvements, job growth in the clean-energy sector, and contributions toward public health priorities such as the receding Salton Sea.

"The lithium development at the Salton Sea presents an incredible opportunity for our region to not only become a global leader in producing lithium itself but to become the manufacturing center of the batteries that will power our clean-energy future," **said Dr. Ruiz.** "I'm looking forward to this

partnership with Secretary Granholm to boost our economic development, create clean energy jobs, and bring federal dollars to the Salton Sea through President Biden's American Jobs Plan."

BACKGROUND

The Department of Energy recently announced the launch of the [American-Made Geothermal Lithium Extraction Prize](#). The Geothermal Lithium Extraction Prize will be awarded to teams associated with American colleges and universities who develop advanced technologies that improve the economics and lessen environmental impacts of lithium mining from geothermal brines. The project will award finalists portions of a \$4 million cash prize pool.

- Phase 1 is currently open, with submissions due by Friday, July 2, 2021.

The Department of Energy's [Advanced Manufacturing Office](#) recently awarded over \$50 million to fund 15 projects focused on the extraction, separation, and processing of critical minerals. These projects included nearly \$15 million awarded to BHER Minerals, LLC, in partnership with the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab to develop a demonstration plant at the Salton Sea to process geothermal brine into lithium usable for batteries.

President Biden issued an [Executive Order](#) on February 24, 2021 directing DOE to analyze the American supply chain for high-capacity batteries and develop recommendations to secure it.

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