

GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION YOUTH TOUR



Washington, D.C.

June 15-21, 2026

Continental Divide will choose 3 **HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS** (2 winners, 1 alternate) for the **Government-in-Action Youth Tour, June 15 - 21, 2026**. To apply, submit an essay or spoken word video on the topic below:

- 1) Discuss how you believe rural communities can play a role in building a sustainable energy future. What ideas or technologies excite you most about the future of energy, and how would you promote awareness and action in your community?*
- 2) The Trump Administration's "Big Beautiful Bill" overhauled our nation's energy policy. How will the changes positively and/or negatively impact rural America?*

CONTEST SUBMISSION and REQUIREMENTS

For essay submissions:

- Essays must be between 500 and 750 words.
 - Writing should have clear flow, be free of spelling errors and be grammatically correct.
 - Content should be on-topic and researched with sources cited in APA format.
 - Do not specify your name, address, school, or any identifying information in your essay. Contest judges will not be given any identifying information to keep the contest fair and unbiased.
 - Email, fax, mail, or hand-deliver your essay with your Youth Tour application.
- Deadline is 5 p.m., Mon., Nov. 3, 2025.**

For video submissions:

- Videos must be between 5 and 7 minutes long.
- Spoken words should be clear, concise, and with minimal fillers (ums, uhs, and silent breaks). It is acceptable to read from a script but remain forward-facing and not look down at notes. Presentation should be professional and polished.
- Content should be on-topic and researched. Sources need to be cited within the speech.
- Do not specify your name, address, school, or any identifying information in your video. Contest judges will not be given any identifying information to keep the contest fair and unbiased.
- Upload your video to YouTube, Vimeo or Dropbox and provide the link on your Youth Tour application. Videos can also be uploaded onto a flash drive or SD card and hand-delivered or mailed. **Deadline is 5 p.m., Mon. Nov. 3, 2025.**

All submissions will be judged on clarity, factualness, content, and presentation of ideas.

Questions? Contact Member Relations Assistant Haley Martinez at (505) 285-6656, ext. 1044 or email hmartinez@cdec.coop

facebook.com/NMYouthTour • [#YouthTourDC](https://twitter.com/YouthTourDC)

About Youth Tour



The annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour is a collaborative effort between electric cooperatives across the country, New Mexico Rural Electric Cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

High school juniors whose parents or legal guardians are active Continental Divide account holders in good standing are encouraged to apply.



The NM Youth Tour director arranges airline flights, hotel accommodations, meals, visits with New Mexico's congressional and state lawmakers and schedules MANY educational and sight-seeing opportunities. The Youth Tour kicks off in Santa Fe where delegates meet top New Mexico lawmakers and tour our state's capital building and other government offices. The Youth Tour delegation then makes its way to Albuquerque for an early morning flight to Washington, D.C.



What I can expect to experience at Youth Tour!*

1. Meet & Greet with Senators and Representatives on the NM Capitol Tour ...



2. A Taste of the Jet Set Life



3. Three Meals a Day

4. Keepsakes Trading with Students Across the Country

5. A Potomac Riverboat Cruise...with Dinner



6. A Tour of Mount Vernon

7. Tours of Presidential Memorials

8. Tours of War Memorials

9. Roaming the Halls and Galleries of National Cultural and History Museums

10. Co-op 101 Class (Huh? OK!)

11. Paying My Respects at Arlington National Cemetery



12. Photo Shoot at the U.S. Capitol Building with All My New Friends!



13. Meet & Greet with NM Congressional Delegation

14. Tour of the Washington Monument

15. Ford's Theatre Visit

16. Farewell Shindig!



* Some Youth Tour events are subject to change each year depending on availability.



CONTINENTALDIVIDE
AN ENERGY & TELECOMMUNICATIONS COOPERATIVE

2026 Government-in-Action Youth Tour Essay Contest

Official Entry Form

Entry Deadline: 5 p.m., Mon., Nov. 3, 2025

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

High School: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian's Name: _____

CDEC Account No.: _____

Applicant Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Use one of the below methods to return this entry form and video or essay.

Hand-deliver: Grants Office – 1821 Clif Lear Ave.
Gallup Office – 2500 NM Highway 602
Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

Mail: Continental Divide Electric Cooperative, Inc.
ATTN: Haley Martinez
P.O. Box 1087
Grants, NM 87020

Email: hmartinez@cdec.coop