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APRIL 5, 2024

Luján Statement Ahead of Two-Year Anniversary of Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire

Santa Fe, N.M. – Today, U.S. Senator Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) released the following statement ahead of the two-year anniversary of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire that devastated communities in New Mexico. In the years since the fire, Senator Luján and the New Mexico Delegation have [delivered](https://www.lujan.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/n-m-congressional-democrats-announce-additional-i-45-billion-for-new-mexicans-impacted-by-hermits-peak-calf-canyon-fire/) a total of \$3.95 billion for the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire recovery. Senator Luján, the lead sponsor of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire Assistance Act, has continually pressed the federal government to move quickly and efficiently to get New Mexicans relief.

“The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire was the largest wildfire on record in New Mexico history and it devastated northern New Mexico families and businesses. Two years later, our communities continue to rebuild. Since then, I have fought day in and day out to deliver New Mexicans the justice they deserve after the federal government caused these fires, and the subsequent flooding. I was proud to successfully lead the New Mexico delegation's efforts to secure \$3.95 billion to help New Mexicans recover. After this legislation was signed into law, I hand delivered a letter to President Biden expressing the frustrations that so many New Mexicans felt because of the delay in finalizing the necessary regulations to provide New Mexicans with relief. I have also worked with FEMA Administrator Criswell and Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas to make clear that the federal government has an obligation to compensate New Mexicans who were impacted. So far, 2,000 claims worth over \$465 million have been approved. But the process has too often been long, frustrating and difficult. We need more accountability and transparency. I will continue to press the federal government to make the relief process as easy and accessible as possible,” **said Luján.**

“Since these fires, I have also pushed FEMA to end its delay in processing claims. In addition, I led the New Mexico Congressional delegation in introducing the [Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Claims Extension Act](https://www.lujan.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/lujan-heinrich-leger-fernandez-introduce-legislation-to-keep-hermits-peak-claims-office-open-until-2027/) to extend the deadline to apply for compensation from November 2024 to the end of 2027. This week, thanks to the efforts of the New Mexico delegation, FEMA [expanded their operations and access to the Claims Office](https://www.lujan.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/n-m-congressional-delegation-welcomes-mora-claims-office-expansion/) for families in Mora still recovering from the devastation of these wildfires. This will allow families to more easily apply for the federal compensation they are entitled to,” **Luján continued.** “The work is far from over. I will continue to push FEMA to work expeditiously to compensate victims of the fire.”

Senator Luján's office is also helping with casework on Hermit's Peak Claims. Constituents can email hermitspeak@lujan.senate.gov to open casework and get an update on your claim, or to provide any feedback on the process. The Senator's office continues to help people in the impacted communities.

To contact the Claims Offices open in Mora, Las Vegas, and Santa Fe, and for more information, click [here](http://ct.symplicity.com/t/hnh/e834fb6c555efa16e83f6404342e7boa/1246065044/realurl=https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current-peak/contact-us) and [here](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/current/hermits-peak).

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