



May 3, 2022

Hundreds of New Mexicans have been forced to flee their homes in recent weeks, as wildfires have ripped through their communities. I've met personally with residents, local leaders, volunteers, and the heroic wildland firefighter crews who have been working on the frontlines of these fires. I cannot thank them enough for the resilience they have shown.

From calling the White House to the Chief of the United States Forest Service, I want you to know I am pulling every lever I can to get New Mexico the resources we need to respond to these fires and combat elevated wildfire risks going forward.

Please continue to follow all evacuation orders and fire warnings to protect yourself, the first responders on the frontlines, and your entire surrounding community. For the latest updates on wildfires in New Mexico, I encourage you to follow [NMFireInfo.com](https://www.nmfireinfo.com). To view an interactive map that reflects the latest evacuation orders for the Hermits Peak and Calf Canyon Fires in San Miguel and Mora Counties, you can also [visit here](#). You can also find a number of helpful resources and tips on how to best prepare your home for wildfire risks on the [Wildfire Preparedness and Prevention Center](#) on my website.

As part of the historic Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, I worked hard to pass major support for critical forest management and restoration programs that help to reduce severe wildfires and protect watersheds in New Mexico. The Infrastructure Law also included a substantial pay raise and new support programs for federal wildland firefighters. In the annual government funding bill that we passed in March, I secured \$5.7 billion, a 5.5 percent increase, for the U.S. Forest Service to radically improve its forest restoration and fire risk reduction efforts and to increase year-round staffing to carry out this work.

I also cosponsored new legislation to strengthen the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) wildfire preparedness and response efforts. [The FIRE Act](#) would update the Stafford Act that governs FEMA—which was written when the agency primarily focused on hurricanes, tornadoes, and floods—to improve FEMA's response to wildfires. It would require FEMA to account for melted infrastructure and burned trees

as well as allow FEMA to pre-deploy its emergency response assets during times of highest wildfire risk and red flag warnings.

In the face of this devastating wildfire season, I know that New Mexicans will band together to support one another. So many New Mexicans from all over our state have sent what they can to the communities that have been impacted by these fires—and I can assure you every single bit of support is being felt on the ground. I will continue to do everything possible to support the effort to fight the wildfires burning today, rebuild in the aftermath, and mitigate future devastation.

Thank you to all of the firefighters and first responders and to everyone doing your part to help your fellow New Mexicans.