



Office of the Governor

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Governor's Wildfire Grant Program provides \$1.5 million to assist 162 businesses affected by wildfires**

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham announced on Wednesday that \$1.5 million has been awarded to 162 New Mexican businesses as part of the Wildfire Business Assistance Grant Program she created in August.

Some 100 businesses will receive the maximum award of \$11,196 while other businesses will receive emergency awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,851. "These businesses, like the residents of these communities, have gone through so much this year," said Gov. Lujan Grisham. "I hope this assistance helps these businesses move forward. Together, we will recover."

Among the types of businesses set to receive assistance are retail stores, restaurants, agriculture, services, hospitality, outdoor recreation, and healthcare. The majority of recipients are in Mora, San Miguel, Lincoln, and Colfax counties.

"Gov. Lujan Grisham saw the need and the Economic Development Department worked quickly to put together this application and help business owners apply for this funding," said Economic Development Department Cabinet Secretary Alicia J. Keyes. "I am glad so many small businesses will be receiving this state assistance, so they make repairs and begin to rebuild."

Businesses that qualified must be inside the boundaries of the Presidential Disaster Declaration for the Big Hole, Calf Canyon/Hermit's Peak, Cooks Peak, and McBride fires or have submitted documentation of physical or economic damage from the fires. The temporary program is meant to support small businesses when federal assistance falls short.

"The road to recovery after the catastrophic wildfires that affected residents, businesses and Mora County, will be long and difficult, however, this initial assistance from the governor and the Economic Development Department will provide a critical infusion of resources to assist in continuing the traditions of agriculture, hunting and other activities that make New Mexico prosper," said Thomas A. Garcia owner of G Spear Land and Cattle LLC in Mora County.

“When my house burned my business burned,” said Kayt Peck, owner of Helping Pigs Fly, a nonprofit creative services firm in Las Vegas. “For a couple of months my business came to a halt, being homeless is a full-time job so just filling out the application for this program gave me hope. I am so grateful that the state has been most responsive in creating this thoughtful program in such a quick turnaround. It makes me proud to be a New Mexican.”

“We lost all our inventory and exhausted all our personal savings just to exist during the evacuation. This grant assistance will help us replenish our inventory and pay expenses we have not been able to keep up with. We are so grateful this program came about to help us,” added Mike Ulibarri, co-owner with his wife Donna Ulibarri of Ulibarri Farms Candy Shoppe in San Miguel County.

Grant funds can be used for construction and repair costs, operating capital, asset purchases and administrative costs. The payment of awards is pending formal agreements with the business owners, which is expected in the next few weeks.

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