

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

**DELEGATION OFFICE
STATE OF NEW MEXICO
HART SENATE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510
(202) 224 - 8962**

July 25, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

Thank you for issuing a major disaster declaration as a result of the ongoing wildfires burning in New Mexico since April 5, 2022. While federal assistance has significantly aided our communities, the State of New Mexico needs the federal government's full support to recover from the devastation of the wildfires. As such, we write in support of the State's request for the federal government to 1) waive 100% of total eligible costs for the entire disaster period under DR-4652-NM; 2) extend the duration of New Mexico's disaster declaration; 3) include coverage of flooding impacts in the disaster declaration; 4) amend the major disaster declaration to include Los Alamos and Sandoval counties as designated disaster areas; and 5) approve direct temporary housing assistance for residents displaced by the disaster.

Since April 5, 2022, wildfires related to DR-4652-NM have burned over 340,000 acres, forced thousands of New Mexicans to evacuate their homes and businesses, caused multiple fatalities, and destroyed over 900 structures – many in which residents and families had lived for generations. Much of the destruction has occurred in rural, high, and persistent poverty rate communities that simply cannot afford to take on the economic strain imposed by the wildfires. Given the severity and life and death nature of this crisis, we urge you to act without delay and approve the State of New Mexico's request to provide 100 percent coverage of federal assistance for the entire disaster period and extend the duration of the disaster declaration beyond the initially approved 90 day period.

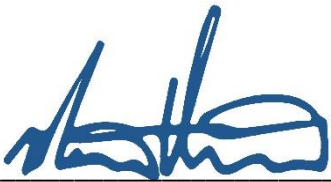
Additionally, New Mexico communities affected by the disaster are now facing potentially exacerbated risks of flooding and post fire debris flows. New Mexico's monsoon season, which occurs from June through September on an annual basis, has already led to flash floods and substantial precipitation events, including in the Hermits Peak/Calf Canyon burn scar and the

McBride burn scar in Lincoln County. The same communities that continue to recover from the initial impact of the disaster are now threatened by worsening monsoon rains and facing the potential for even more catastrophic damages. For these reasons, we urge you to approve the State of New Mexico's request to include flooding impacts in the disaster declaration.

The State of New Mexico has also submitted requests to FEMA amend the major disaster declaration to include Los Alamos and Sandoval counties as designated disaster areas, and to provide temporary housing assistance to homeowners or renters to rent a temporary place to live if their home is unlivable due to the disaster. Due to the urgency and severe needs of this crisis, we urge you to approve the State of New Mexico's requests as quickly as possible. It is imperative that the federal government provides full support to New Mexican communities to recover from the devastating wildfires.

Thank you for your consideration to this important request.

Sincerely,



MARTIN HEINRICH
United States Senator



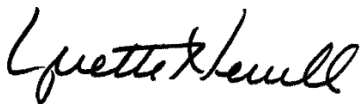
BEN RAY LUJÁN
United States Senator



MELANIE STANSBURY
United States Representative



TERESA LEGER FERNANDEZ
United States Representative



YVETTE HERRELL
United States Representative