



Senator Heinrich: A staunch advocate for the expansion and modernization of the Santa Teresa Port of Entry

Heinrich has worked for more than a decade to expand the infrastructure and capacity at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry and secure federal investments in this rapidly growing center of New Mexico's trade economy.

Since he entered the U.S. Senate in 2013, Heinrich has met with [stakeholders](#) and [business owners](#), as well as [staff at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry](#), to discuss the role Santa Teresa plays as a major driver of economic development in southern New Mexico. Just months into his service in the U.S. Senate, Heinrich [toured the Santa Teresa Port of Entry](#) and met with immigration advocates and business organizations, including the Border Industrial Association, where he discussed security and economic opportunities for the region.



Senator Martin Heinrich tours the Santa Teresa Port of Entry on May 2, 2013.

Heinrich also [toured the Santa Teresa industrial corridor](#) in 2015 and met with officials from the Border Industrial Association and the Port of Entry. The visit also included a tour of the Union Pacific Intermodal Terminal at Santa Teresa to discuss the \$400-million facility's economic impact on the region. The facility, which became operational in 2014, is a 2,200-acre rail site located near the Santa Teresa Port of Entry. It includes one of Union Pacific's largest fueling facilities and the railroad's largest intermodal freight terminal along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Expanded Hours of Operation

Heinrich worked for years to [secure additional hours of operation for northbound and southbound commercial traffic](#) at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry through a partnership under CBP's Reimbursable Services Program. In a 2016 letter, Heinrich [urged then-CBP Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske to extend the hours](#) for weekday northbound commercial traffic at Santa Teresa from 8 a.m. to midnight and allow 24-hour pedestrian and privately owned vehicle traffic. This followed a 2015 effort in which Heinrich [worked closely with U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson and CBP Commissioner R. Gil Kerlikowske](#), to advocate for Dell Inc.'s application to fund additional southbound commercial hours of operation at Santa Teresa.

In his first year in the Senate, Heinrich [sent a letter to then-U.S. Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano](#) urging her to extend the hours of operation for commercial traffic at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry to 24 hours.

He also [introduced an amendment to S.744](#),

[the Senate-passed comprehensive immigration reform bill](#), that would have helped to increase bilateral trade and improve ports of entry along the Southwest United States border, including Santa Teresa. The amendment would have extended the commercial and private hours of operation for vehicles at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry from 12 hours to 24, helped facilitate trade, and enhanced national security at the port of entry.

Transformative Infrastructure Investments

Heinrich has worked to deliver tens of millions of dollars of federal investments to improve the road, rail, and air cargo infrastructure in Santa Teresa. Last year, Heinrich [secured more than \\$31 million](#) from the U.S. Department of Transportation for the Doña Ana County Railroad Crossing Elimination Program to create a vehicle overpass at the Industrial Avenue that will allow passenger and freight vehicles traveling through the port of entry and industrial parks to drive over the Union Pacific Railroad line in Santa Teresa.

In 2022 Heinrich secured [\\$2.25 million in the Fiscal Year 2022 Omnibus Appropriations Agreement](#) for the expansion of the [Doña Ana County Jetport's new T-Hangar](#) in Santa Teresa and [\\$45 million in federal investments](#) from the U.S.



Senator Martin Heinrich discusses expanding hours at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry on April 7, 2021.



Senator Martin Heinrich at the groundbreaking of the Doña Ana County Jetport's new T-Hanger on August 16, 2022.

Department of Transportation's Infrastructure for Rebuilding America Program to develop an approximately six-mile, four-lane highway connecting the Santa Teresa Port of Entry with State Road 273 in Sunland Park.

Continued

Advocacy for Port Expansion and Modernization

Heinrich has long led the effort to invest in the modernization and expansion of the Santa Teresa Port of Entry by introducing legislation, securing federal appropriations, and urging leaders in Congress and the Executive Branch to prioritize this project.

In the Fiscal Year 2022 Omnibus Appropriations Agreement, Heinrich [secured \\$500,000 in Congressionally Directed Spending](#) to fund a feasibility study on proposals to modernize and expand the Santa Teresa Port of Entry.

In 2021, Heinrich sent a letter to Senate Homeland Security Committee Chairman Gary Peters (D-Mich.) and Subcommittee Chair on Government Operations and Border Management Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) [urging funding for full modernization of the Santa Teresa Port of Entry](#) in upcoming budgetary legislation.

Heinrich also [wrote a letter to Acting Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection Troy Miller](#) to bring to his attention the extraordinary growth and potential of the Santa Teresa Port of Entry and to request the inclusion of the port in CBP's plans to modernize the nation's land port of entry portfolio.

In 2020, along with then-U.S. Representative Xochitl Torres Small, Heinrich led bipartisan, bicameral [legislation to reauthorize the Donations Acceptance Program](#) that assists in infrastructure and facility improvements at the Santa Teresa Port of Entry.