

## State leaders working to face long-term drought

Written by By Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and Sen. Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M.  
Friday, 19 January 2024 00:00

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### Heinrich, Luján among senators introducing Farm Bill

WASHINGTON D.C. — U.S. Senators Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M., joined U.S. Senators Michael Bennet, D-Colo., and Deb Fischer, R-Neb., and 13 bipartisan Senate colleagues, to call on the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, & Forestry leaders to address long-term drought in the upcoming Farm Bill in a press release published Jan. 12.

“Agriculture is the economic backbone for rural communities in our states. However, severe, long-term drought is devastating these rural areas. During periods of droughts, our farmers and ranchers face diminishing crop and livestock outputs. These negative effects reverberate

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through the community, affecting not just individual producers, but the broader local economy and food system,” the senators wrote.

The natural patterns of droughts have become more frequent, severe, and longer because of our changing climate. Since 2000, the American West has experienced some of the driest conditions on record, and the American Southwest continues to suffer an unprecedented period of extreme drought.

“We urge the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee under your leadership to consider these risks as you draft the upcoming Farm Bill. The farmers and ranchers in our states are counting on a multi-year Farm Bill that provides support to conserve water, improve watershed scale planning, upgrade water infrastructure, protect land from erosion, and create long-term resiliency on changing landscapes for growers in drought-affected regions,” concluded the senators.

In addition to Heinrich, Luján, Bennet, and Fischer, U.S. Senators John Hickenlooper, D-Colo., Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, Mark Kelly, D-Ariz., Jerry Moran, R-Kan., Jacky Rosen, D-Nev., James E. Risch, R-Idaho, Kyrsten Sinema, I-Ariz., Laphonza Butler, D-Calif., Ron Wyden, D-Ore., Patty Murray, D-Wash., Catherine Cortez Masto, D-Nev., Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., and Alex Padilla, D-Calif., also signed the letter.

***By Sen. Martin Heinrich, D-N.M., and Sen. Ben Ray Luján, D-N.M.***