

Washington, DC – Rep. Ben Ray Luján made the following statement regarding today’s release of new unemployment and job loss numbers, showing rising job losses and an unemployment rate of 8.1%. The U.S. lost 651,000 jobs in February.

“Across New Mexico and America, families are struggling as jobs are lost, hours and pay are cut, medical bills are left unpaid, and homes are foreclosed. Last month, the United States suffered the loss of 651,000 jobs – another result of the severe economic troubles that began last year.”

“Congress and the Obama Administration are committed to taking bold action to address this crisis. We have passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act--which is expected to create or save 22,000 jobs in New Mexico, cut taxes for 95 percent of Americans, extend unemployment insurance, and invest in innovation and clean, efficient energy to create the jobs of the future. Already, projects and programs in New Mexico are receiving funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We have passed the State Children’s Health Insurance Program expansion, which is expected to provide health care coverage to 32,000 children in New Mexico as families are at increasing risk of losing employer coverage. Last night, the House of Representatives took a key step to protect homeowners from losing their homes, which will help families and protect the economy from greater harm. Our actions are important steps, but recovery will take time and require further bold action.”

“We still have much work to do to get our country back on track, and I am committed to working with my colleagues and constituents to stand up for the people of New Mexico who are struggling during these difficult economic times.”