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Budget Passes the House With Critical Investments in Key Sectors, Tax Relief for the Middle Class

Washington, DC - Today, Rep. Ben Ray Luján supported a fiscally responsible budget that makes critical investments in energy, health care, and education - the priorities outlined by President Barack Obama in his budget. These investments will help get our economy moving in the right direction and keep the United States globally competitive. The House budget passed 233 to 196.

"The House budget will help put our country back on track and build a foundation for long-term economic prosperity," said Rep. Luján. "The House budget makes critical investments to create jobs, reform health care, move toward energy independence, and improve our education system while cutting the deficit by two-thirds in the next four years and providing tax relief for middle class families. For eight years, the Bush Administration failed to make critical investments and tough decisions, causing skyrocketing deficits and endangering our global competitiveness. With the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and the budget, we have started to reverse these failed policies, setting our country on a path to progress."

Yesterday, Rep. Luján joined Congressional leaders to highlight key provisions in the House budget. Rep. Luján discussed energy provisions in the House budget that help the United States reduce our dependence on foreign oil, promote energy security and create clean energy jobs.

"The House budget will help us take significant steps toward ending our dependence on foreign oil and creating jobs in a clean energy economy," said Rep. Luján. "The House budget increases our investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency by 18 percent over last year's level. We must move forward with investments that support green collar jobs in New Mexico and across the United States, ensuring a stronger economy and a better future for all."

The House budget makes an investment in health care reform that will support affordable, accessible health care for all by reducing costs, improving quality and expanding coverage. It also makes investments in education programs that will support students from pre-K through

college by investing in early childhood education, new approaches to improve student achievement, and Pell Grant expansions. These investments will make it easier for families to make ends meet and keep our country globally competitive.

The House budget honors our veterans with critical investments in veterans' health care and other important services. It provides \$53.3 billion in funding for veterans' health care and other services, an 11.5 percent increase over the 2009 level.

"America's soldiers and their families sacrifice for our country every day," said Rep. Luján. "We have a responsibility to provide them with the benefits they have earned and deserve. The House budget provides a significant expansion of funding for critical programs that help our veterans."

The House budget is honest and fiscally responsible. For the first time the budget includes full accounting for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that the previous administration did not include in order to make the deficit look smaller. The House budget cuts the deficit by nearly two-thirds by 2013, provides \$1.5 trillion in tax relief for middle class families, and reduces non-defense discretionary spending to its lowest level as a percent of the economy in nearly half a century.

"After eight years of irresponsibility under the previous administration, the House budget makes the tough decisions that will put us back on a path toward economic security," said Rep. Luján.