

February 10, 2009 9:34 PM

New Mexico House Delegation Urges Restoration of Education Funding in Recovery Plan

Washington, DC - Today, Congressmen Ben Ray Luján, Martin Heinrich and Harry Teague sent a letter to Congressional leadership in advance of the conference on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The letter urges House and Senate leadership to include the House-passed education figures in the final conference report. The House version of the bill included significant support to local school districts for school construction, Title 1-A and IDEA - programs that will benefit students and help get our economy back on track. The Senate passed their version of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act today by a vote of 61 to 37.

"The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act should create jobs immediately and prepare our children for jobs of the future," said Rep. Luján. "Education measures in the House version achieved both of these goals through an investment in school modernization, repair and renovation projects, and funding to protect key education programs. School construction puts people back to work, and funding to states to prevent education cuts keeps teachers in the classroom where they are able to prepare young people for the jobs of the future. As the American Recovery and Reinvestment Plan moves to conference, I am proud to join with my colleagues to urge leadership to maintain support for education and school construction."

"With New Mexico facing a \$454 million budget shortfall, the need for a comprehensive recovery package that addresses our education needs is critical. Our local schools and governments should not have to make the choice between service cuts or higher taxes," said Rep. Teague. "A comprehensive recovery package that includes immediate investments in education will not only help New Mexico save and create critical jobs but strategic investments in education will help New Mexico become stronger, more productive and competitive."

"In order to turn this economy around as quickly as possible, we need to ensure that we are making a substantial and immediate investment in our education system," said Rep. Heinrich. "The education funding I voted for in the House-passed version of the recovery package will save existing jobs and create new jobs by hiring new teachers, and investing in school construction and renovation."

The House passed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act last week. The House version of the legislation included \$329 million to New Mexico for K-12 education and over \$39 million to New Mexico for higher education modernization, renovation, and repair. It also included \$419 million to New Mexico for the state fiscal stabilization fund, which could prevent cuts in the state education budget. The Senate compromise removed \$16 billion school construction, \$40 billion for the state fiscal stabilization fund, and all of the funding for higher education modernization, renovation, and repair.

[Go back](#)