

Thursday, October 20, 2011

Santa Fe, NM – Congressman Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico's Third Congressional District hosted an Innovation Workforce Development Summit today to bring together key industry and economic development partners to address the future science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) career pipeline. The summit focused on identifying industry workforce needs, improving skills-based workforce training, and increasing job growth in New Mexico.

The Innovation Workforce Development Summit, held at the Santa Fe Convention Center, brought together more than 50 stakeholders to collaborate on STEM workforce development.

“Over the last decade, the STEM workforce has comprised a significant component of New Mexico's economy thanks to the leadership of the many stakeholders who have collaborated on workforce development and outreach,” Congressman Luján said. “Strengthening and growing the STEM workforce is integral to spurring economic growth in New Mexico. As home to national labs, an Air Force lab, and research universities, the Land of Enchantment is the land of opportunity when it comes to innovation. But to fully grow New Mexico as an innovation hub, we must continue to develop our STEM workforce pipeline. The STEM industry in New Mexico is only as sustainable as its workforce, and we must prepare our workers for the jobs of tomorrow. Especially during this difficult economic time, it is critical that we harness the efforts of leaders in the STEM field, amplifying their work to prepare and train a qualified STEM workforce.”

Jami Grindatto, Chairman of the Board of Innovate+Eduate and Intel's Corporate Affairs Director for the Southwest region said: “This summit was a successful collaboration of thought leaders creating a strategy for accelerating New Mexico's economy. Addressing the future of the New Mexico workforce and the gaps that currently exist is a critical first step to regaining our economic competitiveness as a state. We thank Congressman Luján for his leadership to bring this summit together.”

Kathy Keith, Executive Director of the Regional Development Corporation added: “Employers in Northern New Mexico will be expanding and hiring over the next decade. We must ensure that New Mexicans have the right training to be hired. Congressman Luján's leadership in making sure we are preparing students for these jobs is vitally important.”

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