

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 23, 2022

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

We write today to urge you to extend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) program in any upcoming spending package. The RECA program, originally passed in 1990, compensates individuals exposed to radiation from aboveground nuclear weapons tests and those that mined, milled, and transported uranium. These individuals, including those who worked in defense of our nation, now face serious health consequences from radiation exposure and poisoning. The RECA program is scheduled to expire in July 2022 and while we are working to improve and expand the program, we must not allow this important program to expire.

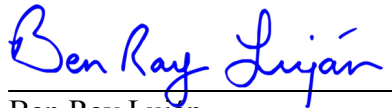
Between 1945 and 1992, the United States conducted 206 above-ground nuclear weapons tests, releasing harmful radioactive material into the air and blanketing parts of the United States, including New Mexico, Idaho, Colorado, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Montana, and Guam. Communities and individuals living near these test sites, known as “downwinders”, continue to suffer health effects related to the radiation exposure from the tests. At present, the RECA program only allows those who lived in limited geographic areas to receive compensation. Thus, many of those affected are excluded from the current program. Additionally, no uranium worker who began work after 1971 may receive compensation. We strongly support the *Radiation Exposure Compensation Act Amendments* that seeks to expand and improve that program to ensure all impacted downwinders and uranium workers can access this critical program.

As we continue to work on a bipartisan solution to improve and expand the RECA program, Congress must act to extend RECA before it expires. With many still sick and dying from the impact of radiation exposure, we must act now to ensure affected Americans are eligible to receive the compensation they need.

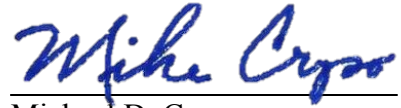
We applaud your commitment to ensuring that those who serve our country receive the support they deserve. That is why we must act to extend RECA.

We appreciate your collaboration on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Ben Ray Lujan  
United States Senator



Michael D. Crapo  
United States Senator



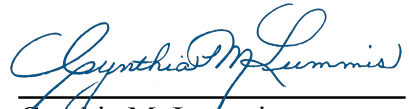
John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator



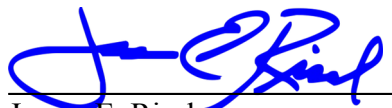
Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Kyrsten Sinema  
United States Senator



Cynthia M. Lummis  
United States Senator



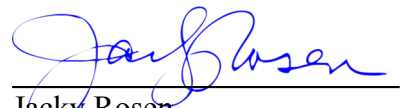
James E. Risch  
United States Senator



Mark Kelly  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



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Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator