

1 A MEMORIAL

2 RAISING AWARENESS OF THE CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY PEOPLE  
3 EXPOSED TO RADIATION AND ENCOURAGING THE UNITED STATES  
4 CONGRESS TO SUPPORT LEGISLATION TO EXPAND COMPENSATION UNDER  
5 THE FEDERAL RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION ACT.

6  
7 WHEREAS, from 1945 to 1962, the United States government  
8 conducted an extensive weapons development program testing  
9 hundreds of nuclear weapons; and

10 WHEREAS, to provide uranium for the atmospheric nuclear  
11 testing being carried out, the United States hired people to  
12 mine and process uranium in many areas, especially in New  
13 Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Montana, Nevada and Utah; and

14 WHEREAS, large uranium deposits were found on or near  
15 the Navajo Nation, and many Navajo people were employed to  
16 work in the mines; and

17 WHEREAS, thousands of people were exposed to unhealthy  
18 and damagingly high doses of radiation through atmospheric  
19 nuclear weapons testing or through employment in uranium  
20 mining and processing; and

21 WHEREAS, radiation exposure has been linked to many  
22 serious illnesses, including leukemia and multiple myeloma;  
23 renal failures; breast, bladder, colon, liver, lung,  
24 esophageal, ovarian, renal, prostate and stomach cancers;  
25 gastrointestinal, neurological and blood disorders; and other

1 conditions leading to debilitation or death; and

2 WHEREAS, in 1990, the United States congress passed the  
3 federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act; and

4 WHEREAS, the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act  
5 was designed to provide some compensation to people exposed  
6 to radiation through certain atmospheric nuclear weapons  
7 tests and uranium mining and processing operations; and

8 WHEREAS, the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act  
9 designated certain areas of Arizona and Utah as official  
10 downwind areas that were downwind of atmospheric nuclear  
11 weapons testing, for which compensation would be provided;  
12 and

13 WHEREAS, the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act  
14 limited compensation for uranium miners, millers and haulers  
15 to those workers employed by the uranium industry before  
16 January 1, 1972; and

17 WHEREAS, the amount of monetary compensation awarded  
18 pursuant to the federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act  
19 differs widely according to whether an individual was exposed  
20 to radiation due to being in a downwind area or according to  
21 the type of uranium industry-related work the individual  
22 performed; and

23 WHEREAS, under the strict guidelines of the federal  
24 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, many individuals who  
25 have lived downwind from test sites outside of Arizona,

1 Nevada and Utah or who worked in the uranium industry were  
2 provided no remedy for their radiation exposure; and

3 WHEREAS, on April 28, 2022, United States Senators Ben  
4 Ray Luján and Martin Heinrich co-sponsored United States  
5 Senate Bill 4119, which was signed by President Joe Biden on  
6 June 7, 2022, becoming public law 117-119 and extending the  
7 federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act by two years; and

8 WHEREAS, members of New Mexico's congressional  
9 delegation are continuing their previous efforts to expand  
10 and improve compensation for individuals exposed to  
11 radiation; and

12 WHEREAS, on May 18, 2023, United States Senate Bill 1751  
13 was introduced by Senators Ben Ray Luján and Martin Heinrich  
14 and fifteen bipartisan co-sponsors to amend and extend the  
15 federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, expanding  
16 eligibility, raising compensation amounts and extending by  
17 nineteen years the expiration date of the federal Radiation  
18 Exposure Compensation Act; and

19 WHEREAS, legislation mirroring Senator Luján's bill was  
20 introduced on June 30, 2023 as United States House Resolution  
21 4426 by United States Representatives Teresa Leger Fernandez,  
22 Melanie Stansbury and Gabe Vasquez and thirty-nine bipartisan  
23 co-sponsors; and

24 WHEREAS, in 2024, United States Senator Josh Hawley  
25 introduced United States Senate Bill 3853, and in 2025, he

1 introduced United States Senate Bill 243 to extend the period  
2 for filing claims under the Radiation Exposure Compensation  
3 Act and to provide for compensation under that act;

4 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
5 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the United  
6 States congress be encouraged to support the passage of  
7 United States Senate Bill 243 and any subsequent federal  
8 legislation to expand and improve compensation under the  
9 federal Radiation Exposure Compensation Act; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
11 transmitted to members of New Mexico's congressional  
12 delegation and members of the United States congress. \_\_\_\_\_

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