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Heinrich Luján target grazing permits

By: Taylor Riggins, NMCGA

New Mexico Senators Martin Heinrich and Ben R. Luján have introduced Senate Bill 2980, the Wildlife-Livestock Conflict Resolution Act, to authorize the voluntary donation of grazing permits and leases only in the State of New Mexico.

This morning, Senator Heinrich presented SB.2980 to the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee Public Land, Forests, and Mining where the bill received a party line vote of 10 in favor and 10 opposed. Chairman Manchin will notify the Secretary of the Senate of the tie vote, after which the Senate Majority Leader may move to discharge the legislation so that, if agreed to, it can be placed on the Senate Executive Calendar. While the bill is not yet stopped, there will be an unknown period of anticipation while waiting for the floor leaders to convene.

In his presentation, Senator Heinrich claimed that in New Mexico livestock diseases were being transferred to wildlife. This is not a true statement, there are no reportable diseases being transferred from livestock to wildlife in our state, and that has been the case for the last several years.

Poorly disguised with the same intent as President Biden's 30x30 Land Grab, SB.2980 stands to target one of the poorest states in the nation by further eliminating viable jobs and generated funds to the county tax bases. The removal of land stewards and livestock grazing would be a detriment to New Mexico. Grazing is a useful and necessary tool to our landscape, New Mexico's number one defense against wildfire. Under the scheme of SB.2980 the management of land would fall under the jurisdiction of government agencies, who have consistently proven that they are not up to the task.

"Livestock is one of the largest economic generators in New Mexico. Particularly in our rural areas", said Loren Patterson, President NMCGA. "It is unacceptable that we have two Senators destined to hurt New Mexico's rural communities and its people. This year alone, we have witness multiple reasons why this cannot pass."

New Mexico Cattle Growers' Association would like to extend their thanks to everyone who responded to our Call to Action, every phone call and testimony made to committee offices in Washington, D.C. is greatly appreciated.

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