

KEN SALAZAR
COLORADO

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
FINANCE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING
SELECT COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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<http://www.salazar.senate.gov>

January 3, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

In the closing weeks of 2006, eastern Colorado was hit successively by two large winter storms. These blizzards left snowdrifts as high as rooftops in some areas and forced thousands to cope without power or means of communication. At the drafting of this letter, many rural roads remain impassable and numerous families remain trapped inside their homes. I write to ask that you help aid rural Colorado in its time of need.

The situation is dire for farmers, ranchers and rural communities. According to the Colorado Division of Emergency Management, there are approximately 350,000 cattle in the area at immediate risk due to the storms. In addition, the Colorado National Guard is performing admirably in its efforts to reach stranded cattle by air. However, the need for additional large scale snow removal equipment is immediate in order to save southeastern Colorado's livestock herds. The loss of livestock currently at risk could ultimately result in severe economic losses across the state. Without proper aid, the situation could mimic a similar blizzard that occurred in 1997, which killed over 30,000 cattle.

Many rural homes are currently reachable only by snowmobile or by helicopter. Acute structural damage has also occurred to numerous buildings in rural areas. In rural Baca County, a school, a fire station and a bank have collapsed due to the weight of deposited snow. These property losses may not be adequately insured. In addition, the property damage is making it difficult for some businesses to operate. They may need financial assistance as they recover from the storm.

I therefore respectfully ask that you use all tools at your disposal to immediately aid the people of Colorado. Courses of action that deserve serious consideration include an immediate disaster declaration for the affected counties of southeast Colorado, the release of emergency funds for livestock rescue and recovery, the release of emergency funds for programs administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Small Business Administration (SBA), and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), as well as any other disaster assistance tools under existing presidential authority.

The Honorable George Bush
January 3, 2007
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As you know, the residents of Colorado are no strangers to strong winter storms. However, many times even the hardiest and well-tested need aid. Cooperation on this matter may very well affect the future survival of these producers.

Thank you for your consideration and timely action on this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ken Salazar". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Salazar
United States Senator

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January 3, 2007

The Honorable Mike Johanns
Secretary
United States Department of Agriculture
14th Street and Independence Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Johanns:

During December, Colorado has faced extreme blizzard conditions in the eastern part of the state. Two large winter storms have hit in succession, leaving snowdrifts as high as rooftops in some areas and forcing thousands to cope without power or means of communication. I write to ask that you help aid rural Colorado in its time of need.

The situation is dire for farmers, ranchers and rural communities. According to the Colorado Division of Emergency Management, there are approximately 350,000 cattle in the area at immediate risk due to the storms. In addition, the Colorado National Guard is performing admirably in its efforts to reach stranded cattle by air. The loss of livestock currently at risk could ultimately result in severe economic losses across the state. Without proper aid, the situation could mimic a similar blizzard that occurred in 1997, which killed over 30,000 cattle.

I therefore respectfully ask that you use all tools at your disposal to immediately aid the farmers and ranchers in my state. Courses of action that deserve serious consideration include an immediate disaster declaration for the affected counties in southeast Colorado, the release of funds for an emergency feed program, the release of emergency funds for livestock rescue and recovery, as well as any other disaster assistance tools under existing USDA authority.

As you know, Colorado ranchers and farmers are not strangers to strong winter storms. However, many times even the hardiest and well-tested need aid. Cooperation on this matter may very well affect the future survival of these producers.

Thank you for your consideration and timely action on this important request.

Sincerely,



Ken Salazar
United States Senator