

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2023

Statement on the Death of Former Governor William B. Richardson of New Mexico
September 2, 2023

Bill Richardson wore many weighty titles in his life: Congressman, Governor, Ambassador, Secretary. He seized every chance to serve and met every new challenge with joy, determined to do the most good for his country, his beloved New Mexico, and Americans around the world. Few have served our Nation in as many capacities or with as much relentlessness, creativity, and good cheer. He will be deeply missed.

Bill's legacy will endure in many places—in New Mexico, which Bill served for seven terms as Congressman and two as Governor; at the Department of Energy, where he helped strengthen America's nuclear security; and at the United Nations, where he put his considerable negotiating skills to work advocating for American interests and values on the world stage.

But perhaps his most lasting legacy will be the work Bill did to free Americans held in some of the most dangerous places on Earth. American pilots captured by North Korea, American workers held by Saddam Hussein, Red Cross workers imprisoned by Sudanese rebels—these are just some of the dozens of people that Bill helped bring home. He'd meet with anyone, fly anywhere, do whatever it took. The multiple Nobel Peace Prize nominations he received are a testament to his ceaseless pursuit of freedom for Americans. So is the profound gratitude that countless families feel today for the former Governor who helped reunite them with their loved ones.

Bill and I crossed paths for the first time decades ago, when he was a staffer on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which I served on as Senator. Over the years, I saw firsthand his passion for politics, love for America, and unflagging belief that, with respect and good faith, people can come together across any difference, no matter how vast. He was a patriot and true original and will not be forgotten. Jill and I send our love to his family, including his wife of over 50 years, Barbara.

Categories: Statements by the President : Former Gov. William B. Richardson of New Mexico, death.

Names: Biden, Jill T.; Richardson, Barbara; Richardson, William B.

Subjects: Deaths, former Gov. William B. Richardson of New Mexico; Hostages and U.S. nationals detained overseas, repatriation efforts.

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