

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 31, 2017

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

This year wildfires have rampaged throughout the West, causing extensive damage from Montana and Idaho to Oregon and California. As we continue to assist Texas, Puerto Rico and other parts of the country recover from damage caused by hurricanes so must we assist in the recovery of western states scorched by wildfire. It is critical to include additional disaster relief funding in the next aid package to help our communities recover and provide the Forest Service with additional resources to repair lands and infrastructure damaged by wildfire and reduce the threat of future wildfires.

First, we must include \$200 million in emergency funding to repair and replace public lands and infrastructure damaged by wildfire and hurricanes. Without this additional funding, the Forest Service will be forced to postpone or cancel projects in FY18 to accommodate the recovery effort. This jeopardizes essential work like the removal of hazardous trees for public safety, road and trail maintenance, restoring vegetation in watersheds, and rehabilitating wildlife and fish habitat. Failing to adequately fund recovery now will only lead to more fire disasters in the future.

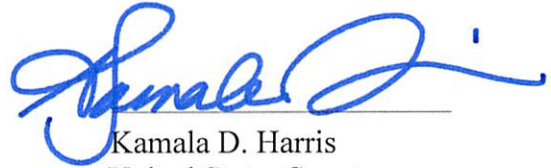
Second, we must seize the moment and include \$580 million in emergency funding to get ahead of future fires. Investing in vital forest thinning and hazardous fuels reduction projects now will make our forests more resilient to catastrophic wildfire in the future. On Forest Service land alone, 78 million acres are designated as moderate to high risk of severe wildfires. If we do not act quickly to fund the treatment of fire prone areas, the costs to fight and recover from these extreme fires will continue to grow.

Finally, as you are already aware, it is critical that we repay any transferred funds to cover the cost of suppression and enact a permanent fix to the problem of fire-borrowing. We cannot provide disaster relief to other parts of the country without assisting the western states scorched by fire as well.

Sincerely,



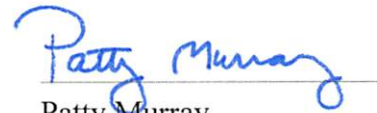
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Patty Murray
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



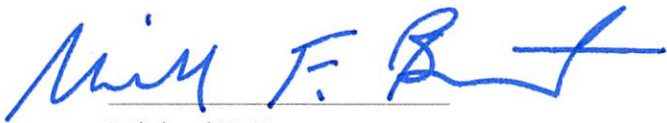
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



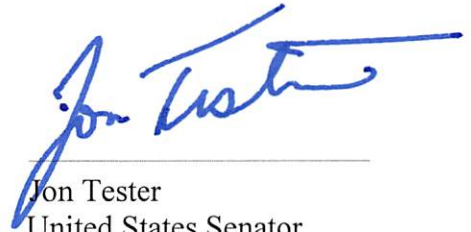
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

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Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jon Tester", with a horizontal line underneath.

Jon Tester
United States Senator

cc: The Honorable Mick Mulvaney
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503