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UNITED STATES  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

October 23, 2014

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The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204 U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

As the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress draws to a close, it is imperative that you take up and pass wildfire funding legislation before the end of the year. Whether the matter is tackled through consideration of a standalone bill or attaching language to other legislation making its way to the President's desk, it can and must be done.

In 2014 alone, there have been over 40,000 wildfires across the U.S., and over 3 million acres have burned. The U.S. Forest Service receives funding to respond to wildfires, but each year, those funds are depleted, forcing the Forest Service to transfer money from fire prevention to fire suppression. This transfer takes much-needed funding from forest management and fire prevention efforts, resulting in an endless and vicious cycle of devastating wildfires, dangerous containment efforts, and scant resources for prevention of the next big fire.

I urge you to attach H.R. 3992, the *Wildfire Disaster Funding Act of 2014*, to any possible legislative vehicle moving through Congress before the end of the year. This bill has the bipartisan support of 137 members of Congress, several federal agencies, several state governments, and a variety of conservation and forestry groups. If enacted, the bill would set aside a cash reserve for the Forest Service and the Department of Interior to use if their own firefighting allotments run out. It would also allow certain wildfires to be treated as natural disasters and enable emergency funding resources to be used to suppress such fires. By providing a more sustainable funding source for fire suppression, federal agencies would be able to continue working toward cooperative, integrated approaches to forest management without fear of running out of funds.

If there is any hope of a future with fewer wildfires, the current broken system must be fixed so that state and federal agencies have adequate resources to properly manage forests and mitigate

the risk of fires. It is time to make a change, and I urge you to let this Congress tackle the challenge before the year ends.

Sincerely,



JOHN GARAMENDI  
Member of Congress

Cc:  
Senator Dianne Feinstein,  
Chairman Harold Rogers  
Ranking Member Nita Lowey