



July 27, 2014

Dear Members of the California, Oregon, and Washington Congressional Delegations,

We are writing to you today to express our support of the federal Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (S. 1875 and H.R. 3992), which would provide the United States Forest Service with access to emergency funding for wildfire suppression costs. As is already being seen in this 2014 fire season, our States face similar wildfire problems that are exacerbated by the current drought. Already, the citizens of our states have been affected by hundreds of thousands of acres burned, and this will likely continue throughout the summer. Appropriate funding for the Federal fire agencies in order to protect other vital forest health programs is key to the protection of natural resources in our states.

Currently, the United States Forest Service does not have an Emergency Fund available to fund the cost of fighting wildfires. In the past two fiscal years, the United States Forest Service was forced to transfer more than \$1 billion from other programs within the Agency to pay for fighting wildfires. In the same two years the Department of the Interior transferred nearly \$60 million to cover the cost of fighting wildfires. In addition, according to a Congressionally-mandated report issued on May 1, 2014, the United States Forest Service and the Department of the Interior are projected to spend over \$470 million more than is available to fight wildfires this year.

These transfers affect nearly all United States Forest Service programs, which negatively impact program delivery and disrupt funding priorities set by Congress. Consequences of these funding transfers have resulted in halted work to stop the threat of invasive species, fewer forest owners receiving assistance to practice good stewardship, and interrupted National Forest restoration activities and active management work to reduce future fire risk.

The federal Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (S. 1875 and H.R. 3992) would move any spending above 70% of the 10-year rolling average for fire suppression costs outside of the baseline budgets of the United States Forest Service and the Department of the Interior by making these additional costs eligible to be funded under a separate disaster account. This structure is similar to how the Federal Emergency Management Agency

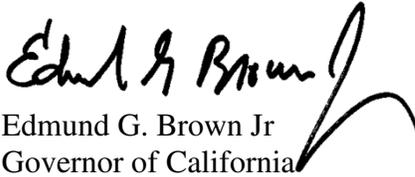
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pays for the costs of natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, or other events declared by the President as disasters. This legislation would also set a maximum amount from this source for wildfire suppression at \$2.689 billion annually, and that total amount may not be accessed in a single fiscal year without Secretarial declaration of need.

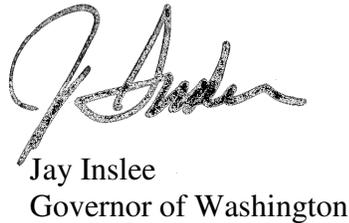
H.R. 3992 and S. 1875 would enable the United States Forest Service and the Department of the Interior to fund excess wildfire suppression costs outside of the discretionary appropriations through a fire disaster cap. This legislation would have no effect on the federal budget because it would not authorize additional funding for wildfire suppression activities or appropriate funds for these purposes. Additionally, this would not affect direct spending or revenues. Federal wildfire suppression would continue to be fully funded by the government.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of the Wildfire Disaster Funding Act, S. 1875 and H.R. 3992.

Sincerely,



Edmund G. Brown Jr
Governor of California



Jay Inslee
Governor of Washington



John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.
Governor of Oregon