



County of Fresno

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April 27, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: The Save Our Sequoias Act - SUPPORT

Dear Speaker McCarthy:

On behalf of the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, I am writing in support of the "Save Our Sequoias Act" (SOS Act) which would protect, enhance, and restore our Giant Sequoia groves here in Fresno County and adjacent counties.

These ancient trees have survived several millennia only to be threatened by forest management practices over the last few decades. These practices have created a massive build-up of fuels in and around our Giant Sequoia groves. Although Giant Sequoias are naturally fire-resilient, this accumulation of fuel has led to unnaturally intense, high-severity wildfires. In the last two years alone, these fires have decimated nearly one-fifth of all Giant Sequoias on the planet. With this expedited timeline of destruction, the very existence of our world-renowned Giant Sequoias is at risk.

Significant action to mitigate the dangers of these wildfires through fuel reduction practices has been too slow due to lack of resources, environmental resistance, regulation, and litigation. At its current pace, it would take the U.S. Forest Service approximately 52 years to treat just their 19 most at-risk Giant Sequoia groves. We need to take immediate action to secure the health and longevity of these groves.

The SOS Act will provide land managers with the emergency tools and resources needed to save the remaining Giant Sequoia groves. The bill will improve interagency coordination between Federal, State, Tribal, and local land managers, through shared stewardship agreements. The SOS Act also establishes a comprehensive reforestation strategy to restore groves that have been lost to wildfire and funds a new grant program to facilitate increased hazardous fuel reduction practices. All this will take place under an expedited process provided by a declared emergency to codify existing emergency

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procedures, fast-track environmental reviews, while also maintaining robust scientific analysis.

The SOS Act will ensure that our Giant Sequoia groves are healthy and thriving for generations to come. For these reasons, the Fresno County Board of Supervisors strongly **supports** the SOS Act.

Sincerely,



Sal Quintero, Chairman
Fresno County Board of Supervisors

cc: Fresno County Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Scott Peters
Fresno County Federal Legislative Delegation
Chairman Bruce Westerman, House National Resources Committee
David Wetmore & Laura Morgan-Kessler, Federal Legislative Advocates