



21 March 2023

US Representative Doug LaMalfa
408 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Subject: Support for HR 1586, Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023

Dear Representative LaMalfa,

We are pleased to announce Overwatch Aero's support for HR 1586, Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023. As a provider of Type 1 unmanned aerial system (UAS) services in support of wildfires, Overwatch Aero has witnessed first-hand the destruction of these large wildfires – and we are in support of providing the best tools possible to the firefighting crews working to stop these conflagrations. We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and that the legislation has strong bipartisan support.

The use of retardant is a vital tool that our firefighters need to have at their disposal. Providing a Clean Water Act exemption so that federal, state, local, and tribal firefighting agencies can continue to use fire retardant is necessary to keep this tool available. Our fire prone communities are at risk every year from the threat of wildfire. It is critical for the survival of our communities, forests, and safety of fire crew members to utilize retardant when deemed necessary. We have seen time and again, using retardant slows the spread of fire, protects homes, infrastructure, and communities by creating a boundary line of attack for fire crews.

It is imperative that we maintain our ability to fight wildfires effectively. Limiting firefighting agencies' ability to do so slow fires will harm forest conservation, endangered species protection, historic sites preservation, and our mission to protect nearby residents.

Whether dropped from a plane, sprayed from a tanker truck, or hand applied by private homeowners, retardant is a tool that keeps our communities safe and our watersheds from being destroyed from damaging catastrophic wildfires. In the wildland - urban interface, we need this tool to protect critical infrastructure and human life.

We support your efforts on HR 1586. For any questions, please contact Jordan Hahn at (805) 668-3451.

Kind Regards,

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