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March 21, 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:

On behalf of the Lassen County Board of Supervisors, I write in support for HR 1586, Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023. We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and that the legislation has strong bi-partisan 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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary Bridges".

GARY BRIDGES, Chairman
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

cc: Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)