

March 22, 2023

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

RE: SUPPORT - HR 1586, Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023

Dear Representative LaMalfa:

On behalf of Yuba Water Agency (Yuba Water), I am writing to communicate our support for HR 1586, the Forest Protection and Wildland Firefighter Safety Act of 2023. Yuba Water was established by the State of California in 1959 to develop and promote the beneficial use and regulation of the water resources of Yuba County. Our agency is rooted in California's headwaters, and the health of our watershed, the safety of the communities we serve, and the protection of our critical water management infrastructure are all directly linked to the forests that make up a significant portion of the Yuba River watershed.

HR 1586 will provide a Clean Water Act exemption for fire retardants so that federal, state, local, and tribal firefighting agencies will continue to have this important tool available for their use. Our fire prone communities are at risk every year from the threat of wildfire. It is critical for our communities, watershed, and the safety of fire crew members that retardants are available for use when deemed necessary. The appropriate use of retardant can mitigate the risk of catastrophic wildfires and protect homes, infrastructure, and communities by creating a boundary line of attack for fire crews. Whether dropped from a plane, sprayed from a tanker truck, or hand applied by private homeowners, retardant is a tool that can help keep our communities safe and our watersheds from being destroyed by catastrophic wildfires.

We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and that the fact that HR 1586 has strong bipartisan support. If you would like to discuss this issue in more detail, please contact me directly at WWhittlesey@yubawater.org or (530) 741-5000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Willie Whittlesey".

Willie Whittlesey
General Manager