

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 7, 2022

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

As the Forest Service distributes wildfire prevention funding from the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* (IIJA, P.L. 117-58) in accordance with its new ten-year strategy, “*Confronting the Wildfire Crisis: A Strategy for Protecting Communities and Improving Resilience in America’s Forests*,” we urge you to ensure that California receives its fair share of funding, given that the new strategy identified the majority of high-risk firesheds as being located in the State.

In just the last four years, California communities have suffered from seven of the largest fires in state history. These fires, including the August Complex fire, Dixie fire, Monument fire, Caldor fire, and Beckwourth complex fire, collectively burned over 2.5 million acres and destroyed or damaged over 30,000 structures. Entire communities, such as Paradise and Grizzly Flats, were destroyed. While this crisis is being felt across the Western United States, no other state is experiencing the same level of destruction year-after-year as California.

We applaud USDA and the U.S. Forest Service for their invaluable partnership with California. The new ten-year strategy is a giant leap forward in ensuring the federal government’s response finally scales up to meet the crisis facing California and other western states. We especially appreciate the plan’s stated goal of prioritizing areas of high wildfire risk through the identification of the highest risk firesheds – large, forested landscapes with a high likelihood that an ignition could expose homes, communities, infrastructure, and natural resources to wildfire.

Thanks to President Biden's and your leadership, IJA will give the U.S. Forest Service the resources necessary to begin meeting the critical goal of treating 50 million additional acres over the next decade. Given the significant need demonstrated by increasingly devastating fire seasons, the fact that 57 percent of forested land in California is owned by the federal government, and the disproportionate share of high-risk fireheds in the State, we urge you to ensure that projects in California are prioritized to protect the most individuals, communities, and critical infrastructure. We also look forward to working with you to ensure that future legislative packages and annual spending bills provide additional investments for USDA and the U.S. Forest Service to meet the appropriately ambitious goals outlined in the plan.

Sincerely,



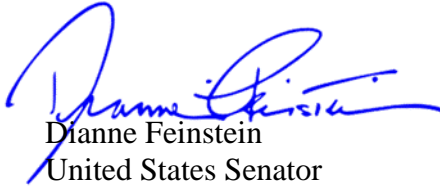
Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House



Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator



Josh Harder  
Member of Congress

Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress

Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress

Karen Bass  
Member of Congress

Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress

Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress

Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

John Garamendi  
Member of Congress

Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress

Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress

Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress

Mike Levin  
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress

Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

Doris O. Matsui  
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress

Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress

Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress

Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress

Katie Porter  
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz  
Member of Congress

Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress

Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress

Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress

Mark Takano  
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress