

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 4, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader, U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, and Leader McCarthy,

We write to you near the end of another catastrophic wildfire year. Over 8.7 million acres have burned in the West, 2.2 million acres more than the ten-year average. Experts predict that this trend will continue, as rising temperatures lead to drier, hotter conditions in many parts of the West. While Congress has provided new tools and increased funding to public land management agencies in recent years, we believe more action is needed. We urge you to enact policy reforms from our bipartisan, bicameral “Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act” before the end of the year.

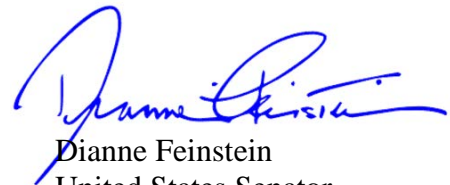
Our “Emergency Wildfire and Public Safety Act” would provide federal agencies with the tools they need to reduce hazardous fuel loads, protect communities, and support forestry jobs and biomass development. S. 4431/H.R.7978 is the result of extensive stakeholder engagement, outreach across party lines, and months of deliberations to ensure a truly bipartisan, pragmatic approach to reduce the risk of wildfire. This legislation has the support of over 100 organizations, including governors, mayors, counties, conservation organizations, and fire departments. As evidenced by the millions of acres that have burned this year, the hundreds of thousands of families forced to flee their homes, and the water, air, and wildlife habitat decimated by wildland fires this year, it is past time for Congress to act.

Each year that Congress delays in passing forestry legislation, we jeopardize the lives and homes of our constituents. We respectfully urge you to include provisions from S. 4431/H.R. 7978 in any end-of-year legislative package and support passage of this Western priority. Thank you for considering this request, and we look forward to continuing to work with you on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Steve Daines
United States Senator



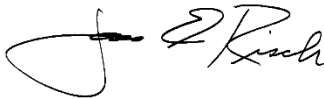
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



James E. Risch
United States Senator



Greg Gianforte
Member of Congress



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Josh Harder
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress