

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 23, 2007

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

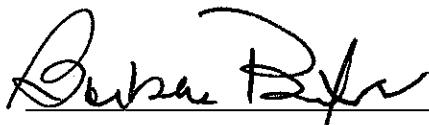
As you know, beginning October 21, 2007, Southern California has been ravaged by wildfires causing the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of individuals, damaging an overwhelming acreage of land and properties and causing devastation throughout seven counties. We write to thank you for your swift response to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's October 22, 2007, request to issue an Emergency Declaration for California due to the Southern California Wildfires. Providing all available federal resources to partner with state and local efforts is absolutely critical, and we greatly appreciate your immediate action.

In anticipation of a forthcoming request for a Major Disaster Declaration for Southern California, we ask that you have the necessary federal agencies within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), in particular the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), at the ready to expedite this request. We also ask that you work to expedite any other requests for Individual Assistance, Public Assistance and Hazard Mitigation Grant Assistance or expansion of the current Emergency Declaration.

There are currently 15 fires burning in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura. As of this morning, reports indicate that over 300,000 people have been forced to evacuate, approximately 290,000 acres of land have burned and over 1,000 homes and properties have been destroyed. As conditions are constantly changing with the severity of the Santa Ana winds, and the assessment of damage continues to grow, it is imperative that the federal emergency response agencies continue to coordinate with the Governor's office and the California Office of Emergency Services (OES) to provide the necessary resources to the men and women fighting these fires on the ground as well as to those providing emergency shelter and recovery efforts.

Again, we thank you for your prompt attention and action on this crisis. We stand ready to work with you to provide this much-needed assistance and support.

Sincerely,



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~~Paul Hunt~~

Ray A. Wayner

Uma Hunt

Bob Filner

Jerry Lewis Brad Sherman

Howard D. "Buck" McKean Joe Baca

Elton Gallesly

Simon P. Billings

Donald D. Driem

Joe Eby

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Q-69

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