

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 29, 1999

The Speaker of the

House of Representatives

Sir:

In accordance with provisions of P.L. 104-208 the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997, I hereby request the following:

Department of Agriculture

C Forest Service, Wildland Fire Management: \$100,000,000

Department of the Interior

C Bureau of Land Management, Wildland Fire Management: \$50,000,000

These funds will be used to address urgent needs arising from the consequences of the severe and numerous fires on Federal public lands throughout the western United States.

I hereby designate the above requests as emergency requirements pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, as amended.

The details of these actions are set forth in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget. I concur with his comments and observations.

Sincerely,



Enclosure



THE DIRECTOR

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

September 29, 1999

The President

The White House

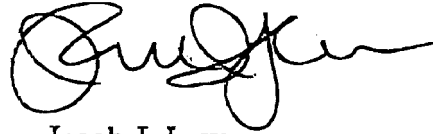
Submitted for your consideration are requests to make available previously appropriated contingent emergency funds for the Departments of Agriculture (USDA) and the Interior (DOI). Your approval of these requests would make available a total of \$150 million to fight wildland fires and rehabilitate fire-damaged Federal public lands in the western United States.

P.L. 104-208, the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997, provided \$550 million and \$100 million, respectively, to USDA and DOI for emergency wildland fire management activities. The availability of a portion of this funding -- \$250 million for USDA and \$50 million for DOI -- was made contingent upon the President submitting a budget request to the Congress and designating the entire amount requested as an emergency requirement. None of the contingent funds have yet been designated as an emergency requirement and made available. The remaining \$300 million in USDA funding and \$50 million in DOI funding was available immediately upon enactment of P.L. 104-208.

Major recent fires in western States have resulted in costs that greatly exceed those of the average firefighting season, and new fires are being started daily by lightning and other causes. Funds currently available to USDA and DOI for wildland fire operations are insufficient to cover the expenses estimated to be incurred during this fiscal year. The requested funds -- \$100 million for USDA and \$50 million for DOI -- would support emergency wildland fire operations, including fire suppression, rehabilitation of fire-damaged lands, and treatment of hazardous fuels.

I have carefully reviewed these proposals and am satisfied that they are necessary at this time. Therefore, I join the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior in recommending that you make the requested funds available by signing the enclosed letter to the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jacob J. Lew". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jacob J. Lew
Director

Enclosure

**EMERGENCY APPROPRIATIONS: AMOUNTS PREVIOUSLY APPROPRIATED
MADE AVAILABLE BY THE PRESIDENT**

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Forest Service:

Wildland Fire Management \$100,000,000

Department of the Interior (DOI)

Bureau of Land Management:

Wildland Fire Management \$50,000,000

P.L. 104-208, the Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act, 1997, provided \$550 million and \$100 million, respectively, to USDA and DOI for emergency wildland fire management activities. The availability of a portion of this funding -- \$250 million for USDA and \$50 million for DOI -- was made contingent upon the President submitting a budget request to the Congress and designating the entire amount requested as an emergency requirement. None of the contingent funds have yet been designated as an emergency requirement and made available.

Major recent fires in the western United States have resulted in costs that greatly exceed those of the average firefighting season. At this time, a total of \$150 million is required for emergency wildland fire operations, including fire suppression, rehabilitation of fire-damaged lands, and treatment of hazardous fuels.