[DATE], 2017

The Honorable [First Name] [Last Name]

U.S. House of Representatives

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative [Last Name]:

On behalf of the [Fire Department], I would like to ask you to cosponsor H.R. 1183, which would allow states that receive Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAG) to become eligible to receive hazard mitigation assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). As one of your local fire chiefs, I recognize the important role that this legislation will play in helping communities to recover from major wildland fires and take steps to prevent flooding and landslides.

The growth of wildland fires is an emerging problem for communities across the country. In 2015, there were more than 68,000 wildland fires, which burned more than 10 million acres of land. If it rains after one of these fires, the fire-scarred land is unable to absorb the water and flash flooding can ensue.

The FMAG program is administered by FEMA to provide matching funds to help communities control and extinguish fires. The FMAG program provides a 75% matching grant to states to offset the costs of eligible equipment and supplies; mobilizing and demobilizing state, tribal, and local response agencies; evacuations and sheltering; field camps and meals; pre-positioning resources; and other activities.

Unlike the recipients of FEMA’s major disaster declarations, many FMAG grantees are not eligible for FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). Meanwhile, local jurisdictions must pay to install erosion barriers and flood barriers, re-seed burned ground, and re-plant trees. If these mitigation activities are not performed, the communities will have to contend with post-fire flash floods, because there is no vegetation and the land is burned too seriously to prevent flooding. Your legislation would fix this problem by allowing jurisdictions that receive FMAGs to start receiving hazard mitigation assistance.

[Please add any information about a local landslide or flood caused by a wildland fire in your jurisdiction]

I hope that you will cosponsor H.R. 1183. This legislation passed the House of Representatives last year as part of the FEMA Disaster Assistance Reform Act (H.R. 1471). It presents us with an opportunity to help many communities across the country to avert the disasters that can occur after major wildland fires.

Thank you again for your support for America’s fire and emergency service!

Sincerely,

[Insert Signature Block]