

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 17, 2020

The President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

Supercharged wildfires are causing untold suffering throughout the West. This year's fires have already burned over five million acres of beloved landscape, destroyed whole communities, killed dozens of Americans, and displaced thousands of our constituents. Millions are struggling to breathe the smoky air that is smothering our population centers with the world's worst air quality that permeates seemingly every structure and vehicle. And this fire season is nowhere near over.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made this year's challenging situation much harder. Not only do health concerns make it more difficult to provide shelter for evacuees, it has drastically reduced the number of firefighters available to combat these infernos. Even prison work crews who normally pitch in to tackle annual wildfires have been sidelined by efforts to curb the spread of the disease.

We write to ask you to use your authority under the Wildfire Suppression Assistance Act (P.L. 100-428) to request urgently needed assistance from foreign fire agencies. With wildfires burning hotter, faster, and more frequently than ever before, our overworked frontline firefighting teams need backup from our allies that have the experience and grit to help tackle these historic blazes. Firefighting crews from Australia, Canada, and Israel have already provided a big boost to efforts across the West, but more personnel are desperately needed.

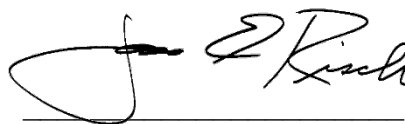
Thank you for your attention and timely response to these urgent matters.

Sincerely,



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Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



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James E. Risch  
United States Senator