

# United States Senate

August 21, 2020

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We strongly support California Governor Gavin Newsom's request for a Major Disaster declaration on August 20, 2020, for the State of California in response to the devastating wildfires burning in Lake, Monterey, Napa, Nevada, San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Solano, Sonoma, and Yolo Counties. Due to the catastrophic and rapidly developing nature of these wildfires and in order to help the affected communities and individuals rebuild as soon as possible, we ask that you expedite the declaration without the need for complete preliminary damage assessments and make federal assistance available under Section 401 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, including Public Assistance Category A, Category B, Direct Federal Assistance, and Individual Assistance.

The heat wave that began on August 14 has resulted in record-breaking temperatures and red flag warnings throughout the state. Exacerbated by the extreme fire conditions, lightning storms sparked fires across Northern California. As of August 20, over 350 fires have resulted from more than 10,000 lightning strikes. Five of the most significant fires, the LNU Lightning Complex, the CZU August Lightning Complex, the River Fire, the Jones Fire, and the Carmel Fire have burned more than 209,643 acres, destroyed at least 3,326 residences, and are threatening more than 42,154 structures.

Over the last few years, California has experienced its largest, most destructive, and deadliest wildfires in history. The current explosion of wildfire activity has resulted in incredible strain on California's resources and firefighting capabilities. Even without the added challenge presented by the COVID-19 crisis, the destruction and magnitude of these fires would be extraordinary.

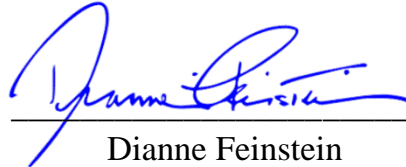
Governor Newsom has determined that the severity of the wildfires is beyond the State's capabilities, and we appreciate your swift response in issuing an expedited Major Disaster declaration. Thank you for your consideration of this urgent request.

Sincerely,



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Kamala D. Harris  
United States Senator



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Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator