

November 15, 2021

The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson
Chairwoman
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

The Honorable Frank Lucas
Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

RE: H.R. 5781, *the National Wildland Fire Hazards Reduction Program Act*

Dear Chairwoman Johnson and Ranking Member Lucas:

Wildfires across the country and world are becoming more challenging compared to just a few decades ago, with each fire season bringing larger and more severe fires, particularly in the western U.S. This trend is projected to continue into the future due to many factors including changes to fire weather conditions that are caused by anthropogenic climate change. Studies have shown that increased air temperatures and drying of the atmosphere due climate change are driving more critical conditions in the fire environment.

It is clear that the coming decades will bring more catastrophic wildfires to the U.S. and we as a nation need to invest in developing new science and technology. Wildfire and fire weather research require robust and sustained federal investments to address research gaps and encourage innovation within federal agencies as well as academic institutions.

The Wildfire Interdisciplinary Research Center (WIRC) at San José State University supports H.R. 5781, *the National Wildland Fire Hazards Reduction Program Act*, sponsored by U.S. Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren, and urges the House Science, Space and Technology Committee to swiftly advance this important legislation.

Currently, a small number of federal agencies are leading necessary wildfire research and programming, but these efforts are not well funded or coordinated. H.R. 5781 seeks to change this by improving the understanding, prediction, and tracking of wildland fires and their impacts through enhanced federal investments and stronger coordination among federal agencies.

WIRC strongly supports H.R. 5781, *the National Wildland Fire Hazards Reduction Program Act*, and looks forward to working with the Committee regarding its enactment.

Sincerely,



Craig B. Clements, Ph.D.
Professor & Director
Wildfire Interdisciplinary Research Center