

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 26, 2020

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

Dear Mr. President:

We write to support the State of Colorado's request for additional support to fight the current wildfires burning across Colorado.

Colorado continues to battle a myriad of wildfires across the state. Throughout last week, all wildfires grew with little to no containment. Threats to life, critical infrastructure, transportation corridors, and watersheds continue to mount with additional fears and concerns spreading across the state due to these wildfires.

We have worked together in Congress to support many requests detailed in Governor Polis' correspondence to you. Recently many of us joined a letter requesting immediate review of an airworthiness certification for a Large Air Tanker pending satisfaction of all safety protocols. Several of the active wildfires force Colorado to rely solely on aerial assets. This additional certification would substantially increase the aid given to communities battling the fires.

State and local governments in Colorado are not only working to fight current fires, but are also working to mitigate any future outbreaks, and preparing for rebuilding in the aftermath of the current fires. These budgets have already been tremendously impacted from the coronavirus pandemic. For these reasons, we support expanding Title 32 to fully fund the Colorado National Guard, which will strengthen Colorado's response to the ever-changing emergency situation. Additionally, we were pleased to see two Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) approvals for Colorado, and support expanded discretion of these approvals to the Regional Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). We also support additional fire suppression efforts through the National Interagency Fire Center as presented in the Governor's letter.

During a Colorado wildfire in 2002, Title 10 Activation of Military Division was employed to assist the state with putting out the Hayman fire. We strongly encourage your support this wildfire season in employing Title 10 to further assist the state and local governments' fire-fighting responses, specifically the appointment of a Dual Status Commander for any federal activities in Colorado. Finally, we look forward to working with your Administration to fund the Emergency Watershed Protection (EPW) program in the near future, as there is tremendous concern that the wildfires this year will negatively impact Colorado's watersheds for years to come.

We are thankful that federal agencies continue to work with their state and local partners to mitigate and fight wildfires across the United States. Please find the attached letter from Governor Polis for a more detailed request of additional federal support, and as our state continues to battle these wildfires, we urge swift approval and implementation of these requests.

Sincerely,



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



Ken Buck
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress