

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 27, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We are writing in support of Texas Governor Rick Perry's May 26 appeal of your decision to deny Texas a Major Disaster Declaration as a result of the major wildfires. Your prompt attention to the Governor's appeal is needed.

More than 9,000 large, medium, and small fires across Texas have burned more than 2.6 million acres, more than 400 homes and several thousand structures. From Governor Perry's first statewide Emergency Disaster Proclamation on December 21, 2010 through present, the State of Texas, along with local governments, has aggressively worked to prevent the loss of life and property due to these fires. However, the size and scope of the disaster that exists in Texas due to these wildfires has simply reached the point where it has overwhelmed the resources of the State of Texas and local governments, who are shouldering the enormous financial burden of responding to the fires.

For many of the communities across Texas, responding to these fires has exhausted their financial resources. Should acreage across Texas continue to burn, communities could be forced to stand idle while structures burn as they will no longer possess the resources that are required to respond. Should you approve Texas' request for a Major Disaster Declaration, the federal assistance that will become available will ensure that the financial burden from responding to past fires does not affect their ability to fight future fires that are sure to come so long as the drought continues.

The stated mission of FEMA couldn't be more fitting for the urgent situation in Texas:

"To support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."

Therefore, we urge you to quickly approve Governor Perry's appeal and ensure that the State of Texas and local communities have the resources they need to protect the lives and property of Texans from wildfires. We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,

Al Caswell

J. Hoffmann

Mae Fry

M. L. T. McCall

Kay Granger

Hone Hone

Blake Farnthold

AMMM

Sam Carter

Joe Boston

John Culberson

Lamar Smith

K. Hillery

Raney Roper

Z. Busby

Louis Schmitt

Pete Sessum

Bill Flow

Pete Olson

Paul C. King

Sam Johnson

King Maxwell

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