Denny Rehberg
State of Montana

Appropriations Committee
Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education
Energy and Water Development
Foreign Operations

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 8, 2009

Mr. Norman D. Dicks
Room B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear, Chairman Dicks, Chairwoman Feinstein, Ranking Member Alexander and Ranking Member Simpson:

We respectfully request your inclusion of the following language in the Department of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Conference Report:

> *Notwithstanding any other provision of law, none of the funds made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-5; 123 Stat. 115) for wildland fire management shall be used in the District of Columbia.*

This prohibition of funds is needed to ensure that $2.8 million currently scheduled to be spent in Washington, D.C. is instead directed to where it is needed most.

As you know, wildfires are a serious and growing problem. Currently, almost 2 million acres of land are burning throughout the West. Poor forest management and the Rocky Mountain Pine Beetle have left forests full of dead and dying trees and that's in addition to the deadfall that cause fires to burn hotter and faster. In fact, the acres burned annually have also increased over the past 50 years, with the greatest increases occurring in three of the past four years.

Washington, D.C., on the other hand, has no forests, let alone forest fires. While the West burns, D.C. bureaucrats are burning crucial resources thousands of miles away from the smoke of real fires. It is a disservice to taxpayers and to the communities who live with the threat of wildfires to spend these funds on unnecessary programs.

Again, we ask for your strong support and respectfully request that you maintain *SEC. 424. Prohibition on the Use of Wildland Fire Management Stimulus Funds in the District of Columbia.*

Sincerely,

Denny Rehberg

Denny Rehberg
Member of Congress

Cc: Congressman Mike Simpson
Senator Lamar Alexander
Secretary Ken Salazar

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