

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 11, 2014

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

We write to express our continued strong support for national public forestry legislation as embodied in the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act (H.R. 1526), which the House passed in a bipartisan vote last September. Further, we ask that you oppose proposals from the Senate that would seek to address forest management problems for only a few select locations, while leaving the rest of our communities behind.

As you know, our federal forests have suffered for decades from a lack of active management brought about by overly burdensome regulation and endless environmental litigation. Too often, the statutory multiple-use mission of our land management agencies has been ignored to appease extreme special interest groups. This has left more than 58 million acres of federal forests at risk for catastrophic wildfire. Disease and pest infestations have gone untreated while timber harvests on federal lands have dropped by over 80 percent. As a consequence, forest communities across the country have experienced mill closures, higher unemployment and poverty levels, and drastically declining revenues from shared federal timber receipts.

Last fall, the House passed H.R. 1526, the Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act, with bipartisan support. We greatly appreciate your leadership in bringing this critical legislation to the floor. This legislation would restore balance to federal land management by emphasizing responsible timber production in environmentally appropriate areas and encouraging greater involvement in decision making by states and local communities. A return to modest forest treatment levels called for under H.R. 1526 would generate 200,000 direct and indirect jobs across the country, decrease costly wildfire events, and reduce the need for temporary direct payments to counties to make up for shortfalls in shared federal timber receipts.

With so many forest communities continuing to suffer economically, and with the ongoing threat of severe wildfires this summer, we are disappointed that the Senate has thus far failed to engage on this important issue. We are concerned that the Senate may sidestep the


tough policy decisions involved by forwarding to the House certain place-based proposals that apply only to limited areas. We respectfully request that you oppose Senate proposals that promise to break the current paralysis for a select few, but do not amount to national policy solutions – especially if these proposals are attached as legislative riders to unrelated bills. Instead, we ask that you insist on broader policy solutions that help forest communities across the country.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Doc Hastings
Member of Congress



Rob Bishop
Member of Congress



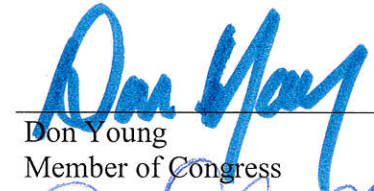
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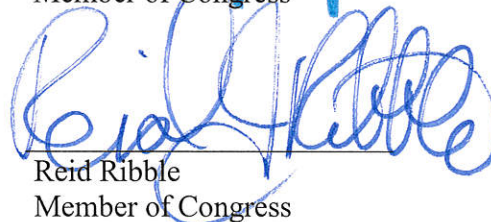
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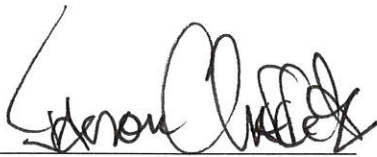
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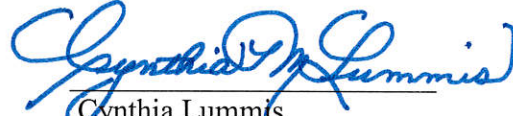
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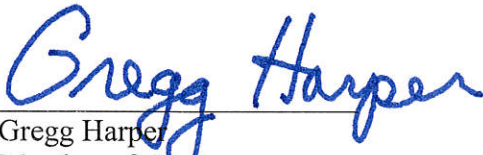
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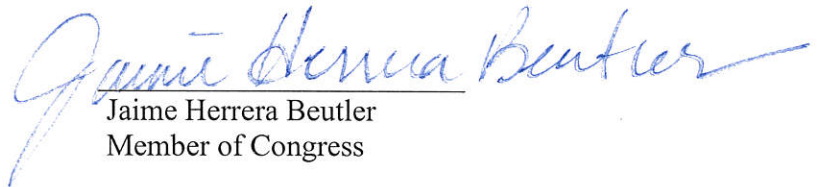
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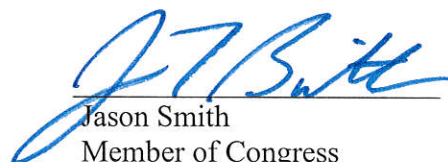


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