

Knowing of your interest in federal land management issues, I wanted to share with you information on legislation that was recently passed by the House of Representatives. [H.R. 1404](#) the Federal Land Assistance, Management, and Enhancement Act of 2009 (FLAME Act), will establish a fund for the five federal wildland firefighting agencies to pay for wildfire suppression in excess of their regularly appropriated firefighting accounts. I supported this legislation because it seeks to address the funding shortfalls that cause these agencies to transfer funds from other accounts to cover wildfire suppression costs until emergency funds can be approved by Congress. This drastically affects the agencies' other operations until those accounts are replenished.

With that said, I am concerned that the FLAME Act does not do enough to address the real cause of these fires - our overgrown and densely stocked forests that provide the fuel for these catastrophic wildfires we are now faced with year after year. For this reason I introduced [an amendment to this legislation](#) that would have required some of these funds to go towards hazardous fuels reduction projects. Unfortunately, Democrats on the Rules Committee blocked my common-sense amendment from receiving consideration or a vote in the full House of Representatives. If we do nothing to address the fuels problem, fire suppression costs will only continue to rise. I will continue to urge my fellow House members to recognize that preventing catastrophic wildfires should be one of our nation's highest federal land management priorities.