



September 10, 2021

The Honorable Joe Neguse  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Neguse:

On behalf of the three associations representing state and local emergency management nationwide, we wish to convey our support and appreciation for introducing the *Wildfire Recovery Act* (H.R. 1066), which will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to raise the federal cost share for the Fire Management Assistance Grants (FMAG).

Wildfires cause billions of dollars' worth of damage every year throughout the United States and have a large impact particularly on Western States. For every FMAG that is awarded, there are hundreds of wildfires the states fight that do not meet the FMAG threshold. In the Western States, the threat to life and property does not end when the fire is extinguished. The threat of debris flows, flash floods, and mud slides from wildfire burn scars lingers for up to three years or longer. This leaves residents, business owners, and officials never knowing when the effects of a wildfire will take out their homes, business, or property.

Because the post wildfire debris flows are nearly always localized events, they rarely meet the Presidential Declaration thresholds but cause thousands to millions in damages to public and private property. One wildfire burn scar may see up to two dozen separate debris flow events, shutting down roads, damaging homes and property, and preventing daily life to continue. These separate events add up to millions of dollars that the communities must find in their already tight budgets to pay for recovery. Therefore, assistance like FMAGs remain important tools in combating the effects of these disasters. Your legislation will allow for greater access to FMAGs and continue ensuring state and local emergency managers have all the necessary tools to effectively respond and recover.

Again, thank you for introducing H.R. 1066 and we look forward to working with you to expedite passage. Please contact NEMA Deputy Director Matt Cowles ([mcowles@csg.org](mailto:mcowles@csg.org)), IAEM Director of Government Affairs Thad Huguley ([thad@huguleyconsulting.com](mailto:thad@huguleyconsulting.com)) or BCEM Executive Director Ron Prater ([rprater@bigcityem.org](mailto:rprater@bigcityem.org)) as we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Sima Merick  
NEMA President

Judson Freed, CEM  
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