Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 21, 2020

The Honorable Peter T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Administrator Gaynor:

We write in support of Oregon's request for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) assistance under Category A, which would help state officials remove and dispose of hazardous materials and solid waste debris as part of the ongoing wildfire response and recovery.

Oregon first responders and firefighters continue to work around the clock to contain an unprecedented number of fires in Oregon and across the West. As we shared during our recent call with you, we appreciate the administration's prompt approval of Oregon's requests for an Emergency Declaration and a Major Disaster Declaration—requests we also supported. The Oregon Emergency Coordination Center and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality have now submitted a request to your agency for assistance under Category A for debris removal and disposal.

The state is requesting this assistance for Klamath, Jackson, Douglas, Lane, Linn, Lincoln, Jefferson, Marion, Clackamas, Washington and Tillamook counties. These resources would help the state respond to more than 3,800 homes and structures that have already been destroyed by the wildfires. Funding would support an inventory of the damage, the creation of staging areas for response, and plans for disposing any hazardous materials.

States are distressingly low on funds in light of the ongoing global coronavirus pandemic. We appreciate the assistance that FEMA and other federal partners continue to provide in these unprecedented times, and we urge your prompt approval of this additional request for assistance under Category A.

Sincerely,

Ron Wyden
United States Senator
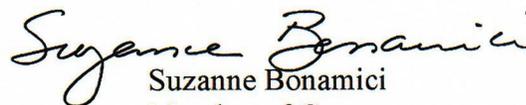
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress

Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress