

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 5, 2018

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue:

I write you today to share my support for the AlertTahoe Fire Monitoring and Early Detection Warning System in my state and to ask the U.S. Forest Service to fully fund this important program to ensure the Lake Tahoe Basin has the proper tools to protect its communities from the imminent threat of wildfire.

As you know, Nevada experienced devastating wildfires in 2017. With nearly 1.3 million acres burned in my state alone, last year was one of the worst fire seasons in recorded history. This year, northern Nevada is predicted to be one of the most at-risk areas in the country from May to July. Given the urgent need for fuel reduction and increased fire suppression activities on federal lands, I introduced my legislation, the Emergency Fuel Reduction Act (S.1752), which would expedite the review process for wildfire prevention projects on public lands that pose a threat to critical infrastructure, private land holders, and endangered species habitats.

Another important and cost-effective step in fire suppression is the continued investment in new technologies that reduce fire suppression costs and increase the likelihood of stopping a wildfire before it starts. AlertTahoe combines innovative technology with on-the-ground firefighting efforts to protect communities in the Lake Tahoe Basin from wildfires. By using a fire camera system that remains connected during outages, smoke and fire can be detected more quickly, enabling firefighters to efficiently respond in order to prevent catastrophic fires.

I worked with my colleagues in Congress in a bipartisan effort to ensure that the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-141) included additional funding for wildfire suppression and prevention, including report language that assigns \$65,000,000 in funds to modernize fire infrastructure and new platforms that detect and monitor fire. Recently, AlertTahoe submitted a funding request of \$226,600 to cover the implementation of four new cameras and upgrade 13 existing cameras in the Basin to better connect to the emergency response network.

It is my hope that your department will fully fund AlertTahoe's request in order to further protect the Lake Tahoe Basin from catastrophic wildfire. In conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service, the AlertTahoe system has already prevented more than 50 fires in the Basin from reaching one

acre in size. This is a worthwhile investment to ensure wildfires are spotted and snuffed out before reaching disastrous levels.

Thank you for your attention to this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff if you have any further questions regarding my support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dean Heller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dean" and the last name "Heller" clearly distinguishable.

Dean Heller  
U.S. Senator