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STATE of TEXAS
HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES

JOE DESHOTEL

Texas State Representative
22nd Legislative District

June 8, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your efforts to help Americans respond to and recover from the disasters that have recently affected many regions of our nation. I particularly appreciate the fact that FEMA has approved all 25 grant requests that have reimbursed Texas for 75 percent of the state's firefighting expenses. Despite the fact that our proposed state budget cuts 40 percent of our Texas Forest Service's wildfire program, we are still in need of federal assistance to help put out wildfires that continue to burn across the state, putting Texas homes and businesses at risk.

I write today to support Texas's efforts to secure further assistance and relief for the individuals, local governments and first responders who have been devastated and exhausted by years of wildfires. Since the fire season began, local and state responders, including many volunteers, have battled more than 10,500 fires, which have burned more than 2.7 million acres and destroyed more than 400 homes. I respectfully request you approve Governor Rick Perry's appeal for a major disaster declaration to allow our communities to receive the federal assistance they desperately need to continue protecting lives and property affected by this season's wildfires. The federal assistance received so far, though very helpful in fighting the fires, provides only about 21 percent of the total cost of recovery.

Over the past three years, farmers, ranchers and residents across Texas have been heavily impacted by wildfires. The most recent bout of fires, which have been occurring since December 21, 2010, are considered by many to be the worst in Texas history. The wildfires have affected more acreage and counties than previous wildfires, and have in

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many cases overwhelmed public safety resources and communities that were already stressed due to three preceding years of active fires.

Therefore, I support Governor Perry's appeal and respectfully request your further assistance in providing federal resources to aid those affected by Texas's wildfire disasters. If I may supply any additional information to demonstrate the needs of our constituents please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph D. Barton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

State Representative
22nd District of Texas

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