

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 23, 2022

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

Thank you for your continued leadership at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). **We write today regarding the wildfires affecting the State of Texas and urge you to utilize all tools available to assist producers in the impacted counties.**

On March 18th, Governor Greg Abbott issued a disaster declaration for several Texas counties in response to major wildfires throughout the state. The fires, which began on February 23rd, have resulted in the loss of lives and livelihoods in the communities we represent – destroying homes, small businesses, historic buildings, and agricultural operations. Texas farmers and ranchers are already facing drought and record high input costs for fuel, fertilizer, and labor. These devastating fires negatively impact both short-term revenue and long-term capital investments for producers, and ultimately harm the rural communities they support for months and years to come.

Texas is a national leader in cattle, cotton, pecans, sheep, goats, and mohair production, and our agricultural operations generate billions in economic activity annually. As local, state, and federal emergency response officials work to address the ongoing situation, Texas producers will need additional resources to cover production losses. As you know, USDA and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) has the ability to expedite and prioritize emergency loans to producers recovering from wildfire inflicted damages. More resources are needed, and we thank you for timely attention to this request.

Please do not hesitate to contact us directly if you need additional information. We stand ready to assist you in supporting Texas farmers and ranchers.

Sincerely,



August Pfluger
Member of Congress



Roger Williams
Member of Congress



John Carter
Member of Congress



Ronny L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Pat Fallon
Member of Congress