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United States Senate

December 14, 2017

INTERNET:
<http://tester.senate.gov/contact>

General Joseph L. Lengyel
Chief, National Guard Bureau
1636 Defense Pentagon Suite 1D157
Washington, DC 20301

Dear General Lengyel:

Today, I write in support of the Montana Army National Guard's Fiscal Year 2018 request for critical funding from the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Appropriation (NGREA) for additional firefighting equipment.

As you may know, the state of Montana suffered from a historic wildfire season in 2017, which burned more than 1.27 million acres across the state. In combating these fires, MTARNG's firefighting equipment was pushed to the limit of its serviceability. To fully restore its firefighting capabilities heading into what could be another devastating wildfire season and to ensure it can effectively control fires that occur on federal training areas, it is critical that the National Guard Bureau help secure two CH-47 firefighting bucket kits at an estimated cost of \$391,047.20 and five UH-60 firefighting bucket kits at an estimated cost of \$124,850.00 for the Montana National Guard. The total cost of this essential firefighting equipment is \$515,897.20, a tiny fraction of the \$44 million damage assessment from the 2017 wildfire season, but an investment that would nevertheless provide an outsized impact on MTARNG's ability to control fires and protect the federal military training areas, communities and citizens of Montana.

As a proud advocate of the National Guard, I know you share my priority of ensuring our brave men and women in uniform are provided the best equipment, in order to effectively and safely accomplish the missions our nation entrusts and relies upon them to accomplish. I appreciate your consideration of this request, and look forward to working with you further on behalf of the men and women of the National Guard.

Sincerely,



Jon Tester

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