



**Lassen County Fire Safe Council, Inc.**

PO Box 816  
Susanville, CA 96130

Tom Esgate  
Managing Director  
(530) 310-0146

twesgate@sbcglobal.net  
Cathy Dirden  
Secretary  
(530) 251-5560

mcdirден@hotmail.com

March 26, 2011

### **Importance of Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS), Title III Section, 2012 and Beyond**

The administration has proposed a 50% reduction in Title III funding in 2012 and elimination from 2013 onward. At the same time they are proposing to double Title II funding so taken together there doesn't appear to be a fiscal issue; this is basically a wash. The administration's 2012 proposal contains the following statement:

*"Title III: The Fire Assistance portion is reduced by 50 percent from the current funding level in year one. This portion is eliminated starting in the second year. Other existing programs already fund some of these activities."*

Title III is far more than "Fire Assistance". The current legislation specifies that Title III funds can be used for:

Firewise Communities programs, development of community wildfire protection plans, and the reimbursement for emergency services paid for by counties and performed on Federal land (e.g. search and rescue, firefighting).

Title III allocations have been a critical resource for Firewise Communities and Fire Safe Councils. They have funded Firewise Community support and Community Wildfire Protection Plan activities. In most cases these activities **cannot** be funded by Title II because there is a requirement that activities funded by Title II provide a "National Forest benefit". Title III funds are also considered "county funds" and as such they can be used as a match for federal grants. Title II funds are considered "federal funds" and they cannot be used as a match for contribution for federal grants.

Under the current legislation the counties get to decide how much, if any, they want to put into Title III, up to a maximum of 7% of the total SRS funds allocated to the county. Overall counties get to split 15% of the SRS funds between Title II and Title III, but no more that 7% can go to Title III.

It is critical that those interested in seeing Title III continue contact their senators and representatives and let them know how important these funds are for Firewise Communities, Fire Safe Councils and Community Wildfire Protection Plan activities. **Do not assume that those who will receive your communications understand the Title III component of the legislation. It is a very small part of a big package and it is often misunderstood as exhibited by the administration's proposal.**

It is particularly important that members of the committees that will write the reauthorization bill be contacted. They are as follows:

Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests

**Democratic Subcommittee  
Members**

- ▶ Ron Wyden (Chairman)
- ▶ Tim Johnson
- ▶ Mary L. Landrieu
- ▶ Maria Cantwell
- ▶ Mark Udall
- ▶ Jeanne Shaheen
- ▶ Al Franken
- ▶ Christopher A. Coons

**Republican Subcommittee  
Members**

- ▶ John Barrasso
- ▶ James E. Risch
- ▶ Mike Lee
- ▶ Rand Paul
- ▶ Rob Portman
- ▶ John Hoeven

Jeff Bingaman (ex officio member)  
Lisa Murkowski (ex officio member)

House Committee on Natural Resources, Subcommittee for National Parks, Forests and Public Lands

**Republican Majority**

Rob Bishop, UT-01  
Chairman

Don Young, AK-at large  
John Duncan, TN-02  
Doug Lamborn, CO-05  
Paul Broun, GA-10  
Mike Coffman, CO-06  
Tom McClintock, CA-04  
David Rivera, FL-25  
Scott Tipton, CO-03  
Raúl Labrador, ID-01  
Kristi Noem, SD-at large  
Bill Johnson, OH-06  
Doc Hastings, WA-04 (ex-officio)

**Democratic Minority**

Raúl Grijalva, AZ-07  
Ranking Minority Member

Dale Kildee, MI-05  
Peter DeFazio, OR-04  
Rush Holt, NJ-12  
Martin Heinrich, NM-01  
John Sarbanes, MD-03  
Betty Sutton, OH-13  
Niki Tsongas, MA-05  
John Garamendi, CA-10  
Edward Markey, MA-07 (ex-officio)

Please do what you can to ensure that Title III remains a tool for all of us to use in protecting our communities from the impacts of wildfires.

Regards,  
Tom Esgate