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**Select Committee on
Energy Independence and Global Warming
U.S. House of Representatives**

October 30, 2007

Professor Michael Medler
Huxley College of Environmental Studies
Western Washington University
Bellingham, WA 98225-9085

Dear Dr. Medler:

I am writing to invite you to testify at a hearing of the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming entitled "Wildfires and the Climate Crisis." The hearing is scheduled to take place on Thursday, November 1, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. in 2172 Rayburn House Office Building.

There is mounting evidence that global warming is increasing the intensity and frequency of forest fires in the western United States. According to a paper published in *Science* by Westerling *et al.*, the western United States has seen a four-fold increase in the number of major fires and a six-fold increase in the area of forest burned from 1986-2006 compared to the period between 1970-1986. Many scientists expect this trend to intensify in the coming decades due to the impacts of climate change, including reduced snowpack, increased drought, and higher temperatures. The increasingly severe human, environmental, and economic impacts of wildfires in the western United States underscore the urgent need for decisive federal and international action to combat global warming.

The Select Committee is seeking testimony from you that addresses relevant questions such as the following:

1. To what extent is climate change impacting the intensity, frequency, and severity of forest fires in the United States, and how are these impacts likely to change over the course of the coming century?
2. What are wildland firefighters saying about recent trends in wildfire activity in the western United States, and how consistent are their perspectives with the current scientific research on the linkage between climate change and wildfires?
3. How will increasing frequency and intensity of wildfires due to climate change impact firefighting in the western United States?
4. What other human, environmental, and economic costs can be expected as a result of climate change-induced increases in wildfires in the United States?
5. What management measures do you recommend to address increased risks of fire due to climate change?

You will be invited to make an initial oral presentation of up to five minutes summarizing your written testimony, followed by a period of questioning from the Members of the Committee.

The Committee Rules require that witnesses provide written testimony at least two working days in advance of the hearing, and I ask that you to make every effort to meet that deadline. To facilitate this process, please submit your testimony in electronic format (in pdf, Word, or WordPerfect format, to aliya.brodsky@mail.house.gov), so that it can be forwarded to Committee Members on a timely basis. The Committee will also make hard-copy duplicates as necessary.

The Rules of the House also require that non-governmental witnesses provide, in addition to testimony, a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any recent federal grants received by the witness. Accordingly, I ask that you attach to your testimony a short resume summarizing your professional experience and a separate document summarizing the amount and source (by agency and program) of any federal grant (or sub-grant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two preceding fiscal years by you or by any entity you represent.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your testimony.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
Chairman