



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE FORESTERS**  
444 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 540, Washington, DC 20001

May 22, 2002

The Honorable Pete V. Domenici  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

2002  
Executive  
Committee

Dear Senator Domenici:

*President*  
Larry A. Kotchman  
North Dakota

*Vice President*  
James L. Sledge  
Mississippi

*Treasurer*  
Burnell C. Fischer  
Indiana

*Northeastern  
Representative*  
James S. Barresi  
New Jersey

*Western  
Representative*  
Raymond G. Aslin  
Kansas

*Southern  
Representative*  
J. Fred Allen  
Georgia

*Immediate  
Past President*  
Conrad M. Moryka  
Vermont

*Executive Director*  
Anne E. Heissenbuttel

On behalf of the National Association of State Foresters, I am writing to express our support and appreciation for your sponsorship of The National Drought Preparedness Act of 2002 (S. 2528). Beyond the establishment of needed national drought coordination, this important legislation provides assistance to states for repositioning fire suppression forces when conditions exist that put our forests, watershed, and communities at risk.

There is a tremendous cost to fight large fires, especially when life and property are threatened. Strengthening the capacity of state and local firefighting agencies, which are typically the first on the scene of a wildfire, can help achieve initial attack success. Authorizing the staging and repositioning of resources through this bill will provide assistance to better prepare, prevent, and mitigate the impacts associated with drought and wildfires.

Further, the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior, along with support from both western and southern Governors, are about to sign the Implementation Plan for the 10-year Comprehensive Wildfire Strategy. We feel that the repositioning language in this bill strongly complements and supports the goals of these documents.

We look forward to working with you to help ensure prompt passage of this key legislation.

Sincerely,

Larry A. Kotchman.  
President