



City of Boulder City Council

Mayor Aaron Brockett Mayor Pro Tem Rachel Friend

Council Members: Matt Benjamin, Lauren Folkerts, Junie Joseph, Nicole Speer Mark Wallach, Tara Winer, Bob Yates

January 24, 2022

The Honorable John Hickenlooper
United States Senate
374 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Hickenlooper:

On behalf of the City of Boulder, I wanted to thank you and your staff for your continued work in Congress securing the crucial investments and policy needed to address and combat against the effects of climate change during these difficult times. The city appreciates and supports Congress' prioritization of green infrastructure and greenhouse gas emissions reduction initiatives in the recently enacted Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) as well as the Build Back Better (BBB) Act. As negotiations for the BBB Act continue in the Senate, I urge you to ensure that urban forestry, wildfire prevention, and all climate-related funding currently included under the "Committee on Agriculture" and other titles of this bill be included as a part of any agreed-upon package.

The recent Marshall Fire that swept through large swaths of Boulder County and destroyed a thousand homes was a direct result of climate change, as warmer than usual winter temperatures, extreme drought conditions in the Front Range, and storm-like gusts of 100 miles per hour together fueled the most destructive fire in Colorado's history. Scientists have repeatedly linked growing greenhouse gas emissions to drier lands and vegetation that become more prone to fires as well as changes to meteorological patterns that have created superstorms and other extreme weather disasters. As the recent fire also demonstrates, these threats now exist within urban and suburban landscapes as well. According to University of Colorado (CU) researcher Jennifer Balch, nearly 20 million homes nationally are now facing increased risks due to both the lengthening of fire seasons and the increased geographic scope of their damage. Just as in natural forests, the most effective way to manage fire risk is through proactive management of healthy urban forest systems. It is imperative that funding for critical

capacity building vehicles like the U.S. Forest Service's Urban and Community Forestry (UCF) Program be included with other climate provisions of the BBB Act and passed together.

Federal investments in applied research on urban forestry will also provide significant benefits for urban communities in Colorado and across the U.S. while building resiliency against future extreme weather events by reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions. As a member of the Vanguard Cities working group along with the cities of Denver, Chicago, Cleveland, Minneapolis, Newark, Pittsburgh, Portland, and San Francisco, the City of Boulder recognizes the importance of green infrastructure within our community as well as the potential economic and energy conservation benefits associated with urban forestry. Funding for urban forestry would not only increase tree canopy in urban communities but improve equity in underserved or disadvantaged communities and encourage multi-disciplinary research on best practices.

For all these reasons, I respectfully request that any ongoing negotiations on the Build Back Better Act include robust funding for urban forestry, wildfire prevention, and all climate-related provisions – investments which have been proven to help mitigate climate change. Thank you in advance for your partnership and support on this important issue.

Sincerely,

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Aaron Brockett
Mayor



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January 24, 2022

The Honorable Joe Neguse
United States House of Representatives
1419 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Neguse:

On behalf of the City of Boulder, I wanted to thank you and your staff for your continued work in Congress securing the crucial investments and policy needed to address and combat against the effects of climate change during these difficult times. The city appreciates and supports Congress' prioritization of green infrastructure and greenhouse gas emissions reduction initiatives in the recently enacted Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) as well as the Build Back Better (BBB) Act. As negotiations for the BBB Act continue in Congress, I urge you to ensure that urban forestry, wildfire prevention, and all climate-related funding currently included under the "Committee on Agriculture" and other titles of this bill be included as a part of any agreed-upon package.

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January 24, 2022

The Honorable Michael Bennet
United States Senate
261 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Bennet:

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