



Washington State Legislature

April 27, 2021

To the Western members of Congress:

My friends, it is with great urgency we write this letter. As you may have heard the Supertanker, a Boeing 747 set up to fight wildfires has ceased operations. The company has struggled with financial issues developing this technology, while advancing it to the point of unparalleled usefulness. Due to COVID, the freight market is desperate for this aircraft to be used for air cargo, where the investment group will make their best short-term gain. The aircraft is in great condition and recently had a digital delivery control system installed, as well as upgrades to improve its safety and efficiency. It is ready to protect and defend our communities against the threat of catastrophic wildfire.

This aircraft, and all air tankers are important because initial attack is the best defense to keep wildfires small and manageable. Our current airtanker fleet of the small Fire Bosses, Helicopters, and other air tankers of various sizes along with the 747 VLAT (Very Large Air Tanker), are critical tools in our efforts in fighting wildfires, and extinguishing the devastating threats to our natural resources and communities.

Unfortunately, losing the Supertanker eliminates our biggest and one of the best weapons in battling the catastrophic fires we have frequently seen over the last decade. The loss of this aircraft will impact all Americans, regardless of location, as we all pay for the high cost of large fires.

It can deploy up to 19,200 gallons of water or flame retardant in just six seconds and fly as low as 250 feet above the ground to do its work. On average It can be refilled in 20 minutes.

It is a firefighting option that we cannot be without as these devastating wildfires are contributing to:

- climate change issues.
- huge amounts of carbon to the air we breathe causing health and respiratory problems.
- a decrease in our quality of life by limiting recreation opportunities and being outdoors.
- loss of wildlife and their critical habitat.
- the destruction of our natural resources.
- the loss of property, homes, businesses, and human life.
- an economic toll to the US GDP approaching hundreds of billions of dollars.

Our time is limited, through this week, to find a solution to keep the Supertanker in operation. A willing buyer, a group of investors or government loan guarantees is needed to step up and help protect our livelihoods, economy, and environment against this devastating enemy. We can put you in contact with someone from the SuperTanker company that can spell out the needed capital.

We urge you to contact us at your earliest convenience. Please let us know if you have any questions. We appreciate your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,

Representative Tom Dent
13th Legislative District
Co-Chair of Washington State WildFire Caucus

Representative Dan Griffey
35th Legislative District
Co-Chair of Washington State WildFire Caucus