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September 9, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi,
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Office H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John H. Boehner,
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Office H-204
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.,
Chairman
House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lamar S. Smith,
Ranking Member
House Committee on the Judiciary
2138 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: H.R. 1727, the Managing Arson Through Criminal History (MATCH) Act of 2009

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

As Members of Congress from the State of California, we understand the destruction and devastation fire can cause. Sometimes these fires occur naturally, however too often they do not. We write to you today to respectfully request that the MATCH Act, which provides another tool to fight arson, be brought up under the suspension calendar as soon as possible.

Arson has been the cause of some of the most devastating fires in California. In 2006, five firefighters lost their lives battling the Esperanza Fire in Southern California. That fire affected countless lives, property and destroyed hundreds of square miles of National Forest. It was also caused by a cowardly act of arson. Today, arsonists continue to wreak havoc. This August, the Station Fire has scorched 160,000 acres in Los Angeles County and the Angeles National Forest and taken the lives of two brave firefighters. Investigators believe this fire was also ignited by an arsonist.

In the 110th Congress, we introduced H.R. 1759, the Managing Arson Through Criminal History Act of 2007 ("MATCH Act"). This bipartisan bill was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. Hearings were held and the bill was reported favorably in November of 2007 by voice vote. One month later H.R. 1759 passed the House of Representatives on the suspension calendar by voice vote. Unfortunately, the MATCH Act stalled in the Senate.

This Congress we re-introduced the MATCH Act as H.R. 1727 and it was again referred to the Committee on the Judiciary. As California and other states continue to deal with the devastation caused by arson, we believe that the time to act on this bill is now.

Once again, we respectfully request that you bring this important bipartisan legislation to the floor as soon as possible so that we can provide investigators with a vital new tool in the battle against repeat arsonists.

Respectfully,



MARY BONO MACK
Member of Congress



ADAM B. SCHIFF
Member of Congress