

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 14, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20502

Dear President Obama:

We respectfully request your immediate attention to the ongoing supply shortage of propane throughout the Midwest and urge you to declare a state of emergency in the impacted areas currently experiencing unforeseen cold temperatures for purposes of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121, et. seq.). Such a declaration will ultimately allow vehicles carrying emergency supplies of propane to exceed certain Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) weight limitations, so that those most in need can receive the emergency supplies as soon as possible.

Historic low temperatures plaguing the Midwest, alongside a number of transportation and distribution challenges have led to an unforeseen scarcity of propane. As the critically low supply continues to dwindle, many of our constituents will be unable to heat their homes or maintain a livable environment for livestock farming operations. Further concerning is the price spike of propane that many of our constituents simply cannot afford. According to the Energy Information Agency (EIA), the retail price of propane in the Midwest (PADD 2) increased from an average of \$2.37 per gallon in the first week of January to over \$4 this past week. We have even heard reports of \$6 per gallon in certain communities. In the face of single digit temperatures with below zero wind chills, access to heat is no longer an option but a requirement for survival.

A number of other federal agencies and officials have already taken important steps to help mitigate the ongoing shortage. We appreciate the work by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Department of Energy. In addition to these efforts, we believe that a waiver of truck weight restrictions for a short-term period is needed to provide relief to our impacted constituents. A weight restriction waiver will allow propane marketers to increase the volume of propane they can transport per interstate trip, which will speed up the delivery of emergency propane to the areas, and individuals, most in need.

Weight limitations for vehicles operating on the Interstate System are set by 23 U.S.C. §127 with maximum weight limits set at 20,000 lbs. for single axle; 34,000 lbs. for tandem axle; and a gross weight of 80,000 lbs. In order to exceed these Federal weight limitations, a Special Permit is required. Section 1511 of MAP-21 (P.L. 112-141) authorizes States to issue special permits, or waivers, to overweight vehicles and loads that are delivering relief supplies during an emergency. For purposes of propane transport, this would allow propane marketers to almost double the amount of fuel they can move at once. However, before a special permit can be issued, the President must first declare a state of emergency under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121, et. seq.).

Given the dire situation faced by our constituents and the unrelenting extreme weather conditions, we respectfully request you make such a declaration as soon as possible. The declaration will serve as a trigger to the truck weight waiver process and will undoubtedly bring essential relief.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and consideration of this request. We stand ready to assist in any way in order to bring much-needed relief to all impacted citizens.

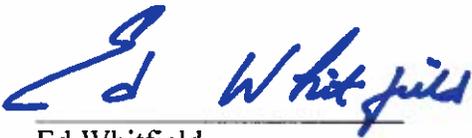
Sincerely,



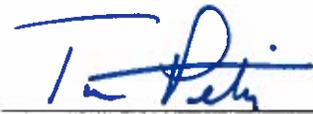
Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



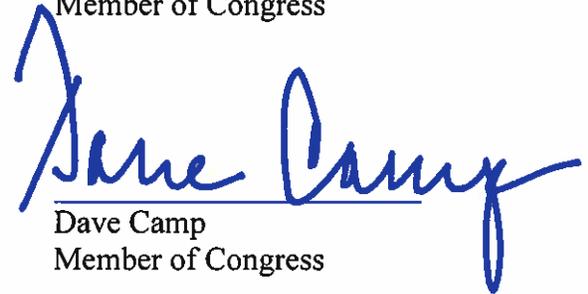
Ed Whitfield
Member of Congress



Thomas E. Petri
Member of Congress



John Shimkus
Member of Congress



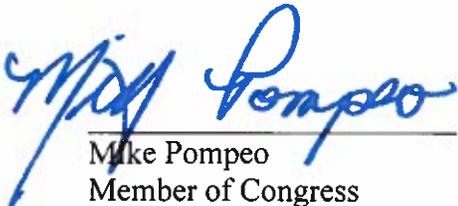
Dave Camp
Member of Congress



Cory Gardner
Member of Congress



Candice S. Miller
Member of Congress



Mike Pompeo
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Rodney Davis
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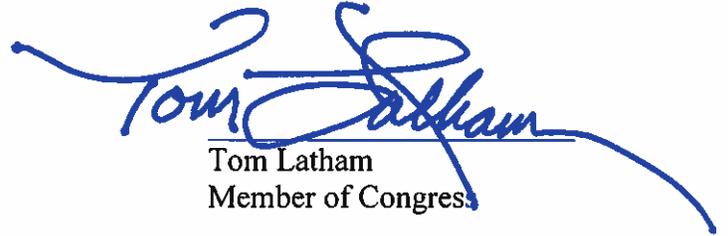
Bill Johnson
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Reid J. Ribble
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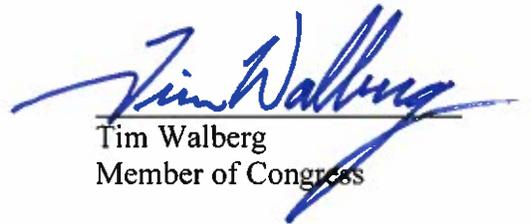
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Tom Latham
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Timothy J. Walz
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Tim Walberg
Member of Congress



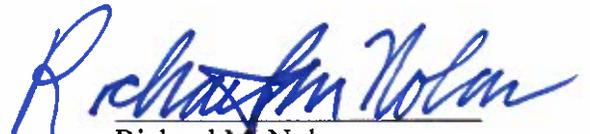
Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress



Patrick J. Tiberi
Member of Congress



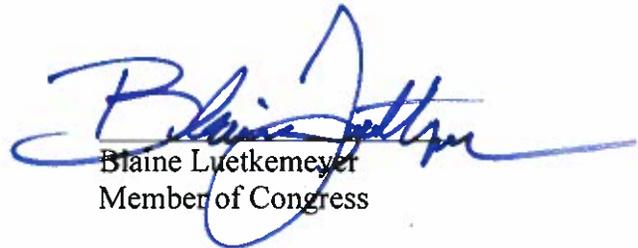
Mike J. Rogers
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Blaine Luetkemeyer
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Dave Loebsack
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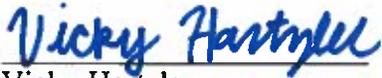
Steve Stivers
Member of Congress



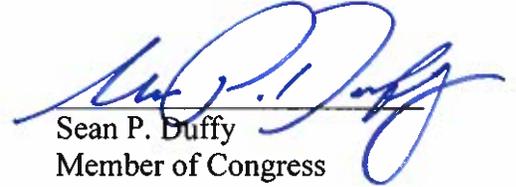
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Dan Benishek M.D.
Member of Congress



Vicky Hartzler
Member of Congress



Sean P. Duffy
Member of Congress



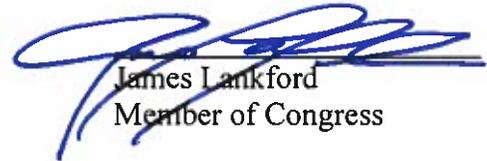
Steve Womack
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Susan W. Brooks
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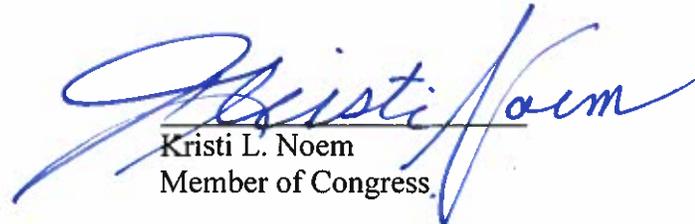
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James Lankford
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Brad R. Wenstrup
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Kristi L. Noem
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Todd Rokita
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