House Urges FEMA to Help Rural Communities Qualify for Fire Management Assistance Grants

STATE CAPITOL, PHOENIX – The Arizona House of Representatives on Thursday unanimously approved HCM 2006, a concurrent memorial sponsored by State Representative David Cook, urging the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to include costs resulting from flooding caused by wildfires in the cumulative fire cost threshold required for states to receive a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG).

FMAGs are available to state, local, or tribal governments for mitigating, managing, or controlling any wildfire that threatens to cause enough damage that it would constitute a major disaster. The way that the threshold is currently structured makes it virtually impossible for rural communities to ever qualify for this federal assistance. With HCM 2006, House members are formally urging FEMA to allow post-fire flooding costs to be considered so there is a more realistic and accurate threshold representative of the actual cost of a wildfire.

“In Arizona, we are doing what we can at the state level to fix the problems within the government that we can control,” said Representative Cook. “However, some issues can clearly only be addressed by the federal government, and this is a good example of what Arizona Republicans and Democrats agree needs to be done. I’m grateful to my fellow House members for the unanimous vote and sending a strong bipartisan message that we support Arizona’s rural communities.”

HCM 2006 will be sent to the Senate for consideration. If approved there, it will be officially transmitted to the FEMA Administrator.

David Cook is a Republican member of the Arizona House of Representatives serving Legislative District 8, which includes areas of Pinal and Gila Counties. Follow him on Twitter at @RepDavidCook.

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