

**SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**



**FROM:** Supervisors Bob Buster and Jeff Stone      **SUBMITTAL DATE:** September 11, 2012

**SUBJECT:** 2012 Wildfire Suppression Aircraft Transfer Act of 2012- S-3441 (McCain- Nelson) & HR 6248-Calvert

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

- 1.) Direct the County Executive Officer to instruct our legislative advocates in Washington, D.C. to advise our Senate and Congressional delegations that the Board of Supervisors and the County of Riverside support the immediate passage of S-3441 & HR 3441, in order to increase the number of aircraft available for firefighting operations by the United States Forest Service.
- 2.) That the County Executive Officer instruct our Sacramento delegation in the Senate and Assembly of the Board of Supervisors support for S-3441 & HR 3441 and seek either individual or joint resolutions from both houses to express state support for this bill.
- 3.) Direct the County Executive Officer to designate at his discretion county staff to provide testimony and advocacy, in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento in support of S-3441 & HR 3441.

**BACKGROUND:** The Rand Corporation recently called the U.S. Department of Forestry's aircraft an "aging fleet" of fixed wing air tankers. S-3441 by Senators McCain of Arizona and Nelson of Florida & HR 6248-Calvert of California, would direct the Department of Defense and the United States Air Force to transfer to the United States Forest Service 14 excess C-27J Spartan Aircraft. The United States Air Force plans to decommission these aircraft under its Fiscal Year 2013 Force Reduction Plan. These aircraft would help the United States Forest Service modernize its air tanker fleet. These aircraft would provide an extremely efficient Type 2 platform to operate in challenging conditions. The United States Forest Service is a vital part of the aerial firefighting arsenal in a county that is increasingly subjected to major wild land fires. The transfer of these aircraft comes at no additional cost to taxpayers. S-3441 also reauthorizes a 2005 law that allows the Department of Defense to sell surplus aircraft parts to private firms that Riverside County depends upon to provide and perform contract maintenance for the United States Forest Service. The United States Forest Service is a significant partner in concert with Cal Fire, Riverside County Fire and for-hire aerial fighting companies in providing rotary and fixed wing aircraft. Support of S-3441 & HR 6248 enhances our fire suppression operations at little or no initial cost to taxpayers. Passage of S-3441 & HR 6248 is essential to protecting the lives and property of our residents and to providing an aerial platform for our brave pilots and aircrew members who conduct aerial fire suppression. Additionally, it shall be the position of the Board of Supervisors and this county that replacement of the United States Forest Service aircraft should include air tankers, air scoopers, and helicopters as determined by the leadership of the United States Forest Service and the members of the House and Senate of the United States. California's Senator Diane Feinstein is an original co-sponsor of S-3441. HR-6248, by Calvert of California, also has Lewis, Issa, and Bono-Mack as its cosponsors.

BOB BUSTER  
Supervisor – First District

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