

August 19, 2025

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
House Minority Leader
2267 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
House Majority Leader
266 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act
Reauthorization**

Dear Speaker Johnson, Majority Leader Scalise, and Minority Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of the County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors, we strongly urge your support for the swift reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS). This measure repays counties for lost timber tax revenues on USDA Forest Service (USFS) lands, a commitment first made by Congress in the year 2000.

SRS is a vital source of funding for forested communities, providing crucial resources for road and infrastructure maintenance as well as enabling rural schools to keep their doors open and provide otherwise economically infeasible programs to students. Counties that once thrived on timber receipts, including our county, now depend on the promise Congress made through SRS to replace those lost revenues to support necessary programs for their residents. The County of Tuolumne received approximately \$500,000 in 2023, which we used to fund critical roadway for underserved communities.

The delay or lack of SRS payments will also damage California's ability to fight catastrophic wildfires on federally managed lands. This funding has historically supported maintenance of thousands of miles of forest roads. These roads provide access for fire prevention crews to thin and manage forest lands and fire suppression crews to fight fires once they ignite. The need to maintain these roads is greater than ever as the risk of wildfire becomes increasingly imminent across California.

Failure to reauthorize the SRS program would prove devastating to rural communities across the nation, including the residents of the County of Tuolumne. We urge you to support the swift reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act so that forested communities nationwide can remain fiscally whole.

Sincerely,

Jaron Brandon,
Chair Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable <County's U.S. Representative>, U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable <County's U.S. Representative>, U.S. House of Representatives
Staci Heaton, Senior Policy Advocate, Rural County Representatives of California