

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 3, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor
The State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Speaker of the Assembly
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Monique Limón
Senate President Pro Tempore
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

Governor Newsom and Leaders of the California State Legislature,

We write to express serious concern regarding the urgent challenges facing California's goat herding industry. As you know, the recent expiration of the overtime exemption for goat herders on July 1 has created an immediate and unsustainable operational crisis for herd owners and ranchers across the state. Without relief, these businesses cannot comply with the new requirements while maintaining the continuous, around-the-clock care that livestock work demands.

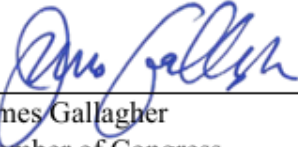
Goat herding businesses provide essential vegetation-management services across the State of California, grazing nearly 100,000 acres of land each year and dramatically reducing wildfire fuel loads. Their work not only mitigates catastrophic fire risk but also supports ecosystem health by controlling invasive weeds and reducing reliance on chemical herbicides.

Herding is a uniquely structured industry. For years, California goat herding operations were exempt from certain overtime requirements which is an approach that allowed them to remain economically viable, care for their herds responsibly, and compensate employees fairly. The expiration of this exemption has created an untenable business environment that threatens the survival of the industry.

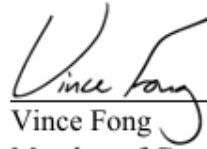
Without a solution, goat herding businesses will be forced to shut down. The consequences would be severe: the loss of critical wildfire-prevention and land-management services, the unemployment for hardworking employees, and increased costs for state and local governments that rely on these services to protect communities.

We respectfully urge the Governor and leaders in the Legislature to act swiftly to address this issue and ensure that California can continue to benefit from commercial goat herding. Without action, herders will be unable to operate in the state and will be left with no other choice but to close their businesses.

Sincerely,



James Gallagher
Member of Congress



Vince Fong
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



David G. Valadao
Member of Congress