

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 16, 2025

Lawrence Fields
Executive Director, Flight Standards Service (AFX-1)
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Mr. Fields,

We write to share our concerns with the ongoing delay in the issuance of a restricted category type certificate for CH-47D Chinook helicopters purchased by Billings Flying Service (BFS). Issuance of this certificate is necessary to deem the helicopters airworthy. They cannot perform their mission without it. With more and more wildfires flaring up year-round rather than just seasonally, it is imperative that quick action be taken to get these firefighting assets in the air and into communities in need.

Based in Billings, Montana, BFS is an aerial firefighting company that supports federal, state, and local governments via its heavy lift helicopters. BFS is a known leader in this space and has worked well with the FAA in the past to obtain several type certificates in a timely manner for the same type of aircraft. Despite this working relationship, the current project has languished for nearly two years without resolution. Given the tragic wildfires in California and the immediate need for additional firefighting assets, we urge you to work with BFS to quickly resolve any outstanding concerns so that these aircraft can begin protecting lives and property across the country.

Should the FAA see fit to continue delaying issuance of type certification, we ask that the agency explain the reasoning behind the delay, what additional actions or information is needed from BFS, and the expected timeline to complete the process.

Sincerely,



Ryan Zinke
Member of Congress



Steve Daines
United State Senator



Troy Downing
Member of Congress



Tim Sheehy
United States Senator



Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



David Valadao
Member of Congress



Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



Young Kim
Member of Congress



Vince Fong
Member of Congress