

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY  
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC  
APRIL 20-23, 2026**

**SECURE THE 129TH RESCUE WING’S SIXTH HH-60W AIRCRAFT**

**ISSUE:** The 129th Rescue Wing (RQW) requires six HH-60W Jolly Green II helicopters to meet its dual federal combat search and rescue (CSAR) mission and state emergency response responsibilities. Despite prior commitments, the Department of the Air Force now plans to remove one aircraft, reducing the fleet to five. This reduction creates avoidable operational risk, degrades readiness, and limits lifesaving mission capacity across California and beyond.

**ACTION:** The Monday Morning Group requests Congressional direction ensuring the Department of the Air Force delivers the sixth HH-60W aircraft to the 129th RQW. Restoring the full six-aircraft fleet preserves critical rescue capability and protects prior federal investment in aircraft, personnel, and supporting infrastructure.

**BACKGROUND:** The HH 60W replaces the aging HH 60G fleet and provides the capabilities required for modern combat rescue and domestic emergency response. The 129th RQW was programmed to receive six aircraft, the minimum needed to support simultaneous federal CSAR, state disaster response, search and rescue, and humanitarian missions. Subsequent redistribution of aircraft to support Continuity of Government missions in Washington, D.C. created a shortfall, despite prior assurances that the 129th’s fleet would remain intact.

Reducing the 129th RQW to five aircraft results in:

- **Degraded Readiness:** Fewer available aircraft reduce the wing’s ability to support concurrent federal and state missions.
- **Loss of Counterdrug Operations:** Eliminates 200 annual flight hours supporting missions responsible for over \$1.27B in narcotics seizures (FY25).
- **Reduced Search & Rescue Capacity:** Limits ability to respond rapidly to lifesaving emergencies across California and the western U.S.
- **Aerial Firefighting Constraints:** Diminishes support for state wildfire suppression missions.
- **Fiscal Inefficiency:** Personnel and infrastructure costs remain unchanged while operating below required aircraft levels.

**Operational Impact Comparison Chart**

<b>Capability Metric</b>	<b>6 Aircraft</b>	<b>5 Aircraft</b>
Total Fleet	6	5
Available Aircraft (after maintenance)	5	4
Capability Gap	—	16.6% reduction
Readiness Impact	Full mission capability	9.6% degradation
Counterdrug Flight Hours	200 annually	Eliminated
Mission Coverage	Federal + State	Limited capacity