

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4852

To increase the preparation of structural firefighters to assist in wildfire and wildland-urban interface fire response efforts and the coordination of firefighting teams across all levels of government, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 1, 2025

Mr. HARDER of California (for himself and Mr. VALADAO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure, Armed Services, and Education and Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To increase the preparation of structural firefighters to assist in wildfire and wildland-urban interface fire response efforts and the coordination of firefighting teams across all levels of government, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Wildfire Emergency
5 Preparedness Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. TRAINING PLAN AND GRANT PROGRAM UNDER THE**
2 **UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF NATIONAL TRAINING
4 PLAN.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enact-
5 ment of this Act, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
6 through the Chief of the Forest Service, in consultation
7 with the entities described in subsection (b), shall publish
8 a plan to train structural firefighters in the United States,
9 including such firefighters employed by the Federal Gov-
10 ernment, to respond safely and effectively to incidents of
11 the following:

12 (1) Wildfire.

13 (2) Fire in the wildland-urban interface.

14 (b) ENTITIES DESCRIBED.—The entities described in
15 this subsection are the following:

16 (1) The Secretary of the Interior.

17 (2) The Under Secretary of Agriculture for Fire
18 Coordination (as established under section 3(a)).

19 (3) The Superintendent of the National Acad-
20 emy for Fire Prevention and Control of the Federal
21 Emergency Management Agency.

22 (c) GUIDELINES.—The plan published under sub-
23 section (a) shall include guidelines for a training cur-
24 riculum that incorporates the following:

25 (1) Such training materials as may be devel-
26 oped by the Superintendent of the National Acad-

1 emy for Fire Prevention and Control pursuant to
2 section 7 of the Federal Fire Prevention and Control
3 Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2206).

4 (2) The material for courses S–130 and S–190
5 (or any substantially similar successor course) devel-
6 oped by the National Wildlife Coordinating Group.

7 (d) TRAINING DEVELOPMENT GRANTS.—The Sec-
8 retary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the For-
9 est Service, may make a grant, on a competitive basis,
10 to an eligible entity to carry out a training program for
11 structural firefighters with a curriculum that—

12 (1) adheres to the plan published under sub-
13 section (a); and

14 (2) satisfies the guidelines referred to in sub-
15 section (c).

16 (e) ELIGIBILITY.—An entity is an eligible entity and
17 eligible to apply for a grant described in subsection (d)
18 if the entity is a nonprofit organization that provides
19 training or development programs for structural fire-
20 fighters with demonstrated experience with respect to each
21 of the following:

22 (1) Developing curricula for classroom and
23 practical training of structural firefighters.

24 (2) Delivering teaching or training programs,
25 both in-person and online, to structural firefighters

1 on topics related to fireground safety and wildfire
2 operations.

3 (3) Collaboration with national nonprofit orga-
4 nizations to support research on firefighting safety
5 and the health and wellness of firefighters.

6 (f) APPLICATIONS.—An eligible entity may apply to
7 the Secretary of Agriculture, in a form and manner deter-
8 mined by the Secretary, for a grant under this section if
9 the application includes a certification that the training
10 program referred to in subsection (d) is to be carried out
11 in consultation with each of the following:

12 (1) Firefighting personnel of State and local
13 fire service agencies, including such personnel with
14 supervisory responsibilities or heads of such agen-
15 cies.

16 (2) Volunteer firefighters.

17 (3) State and local officials who maintain and
18 enforce building codes.

19 (4) Researchers with experience investigating
20 firefighting injuries and fatalities.

21 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be
23 appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for
24 each of fiscal years 2026 through 2031.

1 (2) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary of
2 Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest
3 Service, may obligate and expend, for each fiscal
4 year specified in paragraph (1), not more than 2.5
5 percent of the amount authorized to be appropriated
6 under such paragraph for technical assistance.

7 (3) CARRYOVER.—Amounts authorized to be
8 appropriated to carry out this section shall remain
9 available until expended.

10 **SEC. 3. COORDINATION OF WILDFIRE AND WILDLAND-**
11 **URBAN INTERFACE FIRE OPERATIONS.**

12 (a) UNDER SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE FOR FIRE
13 COORDINATION.—

14 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in
15 the Department of Agriculture a position known as
16 the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Fire Coordi-
17 nation (referred to in this section as the “Under
18 Secretary”), who shall be appointed by the Presi-
19 dent, by and with the advice and consent of the Sen-
20 ate.

21 (2) DUTIES.—

22 (A) FIRE PREPAREDNESS AND RE-
23 SPONSE.—The Under Secretary shall serve as
24 the principal adviser to the Secretary of Agri-
25 culture for any matter that relates to the co-

ordination of Federal, State, and local governments in preparing for, and responding to, incidents of the following:

(i) Wildfire.

(ii) Fires occurring in the wildland-urban interface.

(B) INTEGRATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS.—The Under Secretary shall coordinate with the Chief of the Forest Service with respect to the following:

(i) Improving the effectiveness of firefighting operations conducted by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(ii) Advising the Secretary of Agriculture regarding the coordination described in subparagraph (A).

(C) OTHER DUTIES.—The Under Secretary shall exercise such other functions, and perform such other duties, as may be required by law or prescribed by the Secretary of Agriculture.

(b) WILDLAND FIRE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL; NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Sec-

1 retary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Inte-
2 rior shall take such necessary actions to ensure that
3 a representative of a national labor organization rep-
4 resenting State and local firefighters is a member of
5 the following:

6 (A) The Wildland Fire Leadership Council.

7 (B) The National Wildfire Coordinating
8 Group.

9 (2) APPLICATION.—A representative described
10 in paragraph (1) may be a member of the Wildland
11 Fire Leadership Council and the National Wildfire
12 Coordinating Group at the same time if the Sec-
13 retary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Inte-
14 rior determine such is appropriate.

15 **SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FIREFIGHTING PER-**
16 **SONNEL.**

17 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
18 sion of law, upon request from a qualified agency head,
19 the Secretary of Defense may authorize firefighters in the
20 Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist
21 the qualified agency head in conducting operations, in re-
22 sponse to incidents of wildfire or fire in the wildland-urban
23 interface.

24 (b) REIMBURSEMENT.—A qualified agency head who
25 makes a request to the Secretary of Defense under sub-

1 section (a) shall reimburse the Secretary for the costs of
2 the services provided by the Secretary pursuant to the re-
3 quest, at rates determined, and agreed to, by the Sec-
4 retary, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Secretary of
5 the Interior.

6 (c) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Secretary of De-
7 fense shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
8 mittees a report on any financial and logistical barriers
9 to conducting the operations, or providing the assistance,
10 described in subsection (a).

11 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
13 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
14 mittees” means the following:

15 (A) The Committee on Agriculture of the
16 House of Representatives.

17 (B) The Committee on Natural Resources
18 of the House of Representatives.

19 (C) The Committee on Science, Space, and
20 Technology of the House of Representatives.

21 (D) The Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
22 tion, and Forestry of the Senate.

23 (E) The Committee on Energy and Nat-
24 ural Resources of the Senate.

1 (F) The Committee on Homeland Security
2 and Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

3 (2) QUALIFIED AGENCY HEAD.—The term
4 “qualified agency head” means any of the following:

5 (A) The Secretary of Agriculture.

6 (B) The Secretary of the Interior.

7 (C) The head of any other relevant agency,
8 as determined by the Secretary of Defense.

9 **SEC. 5. FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY RESEARCH IN**
10 **THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OCCUPA-**
11 **TIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH.**

12 Section 22 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act
13 of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 671) is amended by adding at the end
14 the following new subsection:

15 “(i) PROGRAM OF FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFE-
16 TY RESEARCH.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Director shall carry
18 out a research and development program with re-
19 spect to accomplish the following:

20 “(A) To protect the respiratory health of
21 firefighters responding to incidents of wildfire
22 or fires in the wildland-urban interface.

23 “(B) To identify and measure per- and
24 polyfluoroalkyl substances (commonly referred

1 to as ‘PFAS’) and other carcinogens which may
2 be present in any of the following:

3 “(i) Areas affected by—

4 “(I) incidents of wildfire or fire
5 in the wildland-urban interface; or

6 “(II) firefighting operations con-
7 ducted in response to such incidents.

8 “(ii) Protective equipment used by
9 firefighters responding to such incidents.

10 “(iii) Any other setting, as determined
11 by the Director in accordance with para-
12 graph (2)(B).

13 “(2) CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS.—

14 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out this
15 subsection, the Director shall consult with the
16 following:

17 “(i) The Administrator of the United
18 States Fire Administration.

19 “(ii) The Secretary of Agriculture.

20 “(iii) Representatives from such non-
21 profit organizations or labor unions rep-
22 resenting firefighters and fire officers in
23 the public sector.

24 “(B) PFAS EXPOSURE INVESTIGATIONS.—

25 In identifying any other setting under para-

1 graph (1)(B)(iii), the Director shall consult
2 with the following:

3 “(i) The entities specified in subpara-
4 graph (A).

5 “(ii) Stakeholders from the industries
6 that manufacture equipment for, or pro-
7 vide assistance to, firefighters.

8 “(iii) Structural firefighters who have
9 responded to incidents of wildfire or fires
10 in the wildland-urban interface.

11 “(iv) The Secretary of the Interior.

12 “(v) The Administrator of the Envi-
13 ronmental Protection Agency.

14 “(3) REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—Not later than
15 180 days after the date of the enactment of this
16 subsection and annually thereafter, the Director
17 shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
18 mittees a report on the following:

19 “(A) The progress of the Director in car-
20 rying out this subsection.

21 “(B) Any research findings identified as a
22 result of the research conducted under this sub-
23 section.

24 “(4) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

25 There are authorized to be appropriated

1 \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through
2 2031 to carry out this subsection.

3 “(5) DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE CONGRES-
4 SIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this subsection, the term
5 ‘appropriate congressional committees’ means the
6 following:

7 “(A) The Committee on Natural Resources
8 of the House of Representatives.

9 “(B) The Committee on Energy and Nat-
10 ural Resources of the Senate.”.

11 **SEC. 6. MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR FIRST RE-**
12 **SPONDERS.**

13 Section 327(d) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
14 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
15 5165f(d)) is amended—

16 (1) in paragraph (1)—

17 (A) by striking “Administration” and in-
18 serting “Administrator”; and

19 (B) by inserting “, subject to paragraph
20 (4)” after “participation”; and

21 (2) by adding at the end the following new
22 paragraph:

23 “(4) CRITERIA FOR MENTAL HEALTH ASSIST-
24 ANCE.—

1 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
2 shall include the following in the criteria de-
3 scribed in paragraph (1):

4 “(i) Criteria specifying that a task
5 force with firefighters or other emergency
6 responders as members shall include, as
7 members of the task force, mental health
8 practitioners qualified to treat, monitor, or
9 assess such firefighters or other emergency
10 responders for post-traumatic stress inju-
11 ries or other mental or behavioral health
12 conditions attributable to service in the
13 task force.

14 “(ii) Criteria for each member of a
15 task force to be trained in peer mental
16 health support services and to provide such
17 services to an emergency responder serving
18 in the task force.

19 “(iii) Criteria establishing that the
20 peer mental health support services re-
21 ferred to in clause (ii) include the fol-
22 lowing:

23 “(I) Identification of warning
24 signs of post-traumatic stress injuries.

1 “(II) Recognition of symptoms of
2 behavioral health conditions.

3 “(III) Application of de-esca-
4 lation methods.

5 “(IV) Referral to mental health
6 practitioners when appropriate.

7 “(B) CONSULTATION.—The Administrator
8 may consult with nonprofit organizations to de-
9 velop the criteria described in subparagraph (A)
10 and provide grants to such organizations to
11 provide training to task forces to comply with
12 such criteria.

13 “(C) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
14 TIONS.—From amounts authorized to be appro-
15 priated to carry out this section, the Adminis-
16 trator may obligate and expend not more than
17 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026
18 through 2031 to carry out this paragraph.”.

19 **SEC. 7. SUPPLEMENTAL FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE.**

20 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture, act-
21 ing through the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Fire
22 Coordination, in consultation with the chief executives of
23 each State in which a respective potential recipient is lo-
24 cated, may award grants on a competitive basis directly
25 to—

1 (1) fire departments, for the purpose of pro-
2 tecting the health and safety of the public and fire-
3 fighting personnel throughout the United States
4 against fire, fire-related hazards, and other hazards;
5 and

6 (2) nonaffiliated EMS organizations (as defined
7 in section 33(a) of the Federal Fire Prevention and
8 Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229(a))) to sup-
9 port the provision of emergency medical services.

10 (b) MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNTS.—

11 (1) POPULATION.—Subject to paragraph (2),
12 the Secretary of Agriculture may not award a grant
13 under this section in excess of amounts as follows:

14 (A) In the case of a recipient that serves
15 a jurisdiction of 100,000 people or fewer, the
16 amount of the grant to such recipient shall not
17 exceed \$1,000,000 in any fiscal year.

18 (B) In the case of a recipient that serves
19 a jurisdiction with more than 100,000 people
20 but not more than 500,000 people, the amount
21 of the grant award to such recipient shall not
22 exceed \$2,000,000 in any fiscal year.

23 (C) In the case of a recipient that serves
24 a jurisdiction with more than 500,000 but not
25 more than 1,000,000 people, the amount of the

1 grant awarded to such recipient shall not ex-
2 ceed \$3,000,000 in any fiscal year.

3 (D) In the case of a recipient that serves
4 a jurisdiction with more than 1,000,000 people
5 but not more than 2,500,000 people, the
6 amount of the grant awarded to such recipient
7 shall not exceed \$6,000,000 for any fiscal year.

8 (E) In the case of a recipient that serves
9 a jurisdiction with more than 2,500,000 people,
10 the amount of the grant awarded to such recipi-
11 ent shall not exceed \$9,000,000 in any fiscal
12 year.

13 (2) AGGREGATE.—

14 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided
15 under subparagraph (B), the Secretary of Agri-
16 culture may not award a grant under this sec-
17 tion in a fiscal year in an amount that exceeds
18 the amount that is one percent of the available
19 grand funds in such fiscal year.

20 (B) EXCEPTION.—The Secretary of Agri-
21 culture may waive the limitation in subpara-
22 graph (A) with respect to a grant recipient if
23 the Secretary determines that such recipient
24 has an extraordinary need for a grant in an

1 amount that exceeds the limit under the sub-
2 paragraph.

3 (c) USE OF GRANT FUNDS.—Each recipient of a
4 grant under this subsection shall use the grant for one
5 or more of the following purposes:

6 (1) To obtain personal protective equipment
7 suitable for responding to incidents of wildfire or
8 fires in the wildland-urban interface.

9 (2) To train firefighting personnel in respond-
10 ing to incidents of wildfire or fires in the wildland-
11 urban interface.

12 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR
13 GRANTS.—There is authorized to be appropriated
14 \$100,000,000 for fiscal year 2026 to make grants under
15 this section.

16 **SEC. 8. REPORT TO CONGRESS ON OPERATIONS INVOLV-**
17 **ING WILDFIRES AND FIRES IN THE**
18 **WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
20 date of the enactment of this section, the Under Secretary
21 of Agriculture for Fire Coordination, in consultation with
22 such nonprofit organizations or labor organizations rep-
23 resenting firefighters as determined appropriate by the
24 Under Secretary, shall submit to the appropriate congres-

1 sional committees a report that contains information relat-
2 ing to the following:

3 (1) The extent to which local fire service pro-
4 viders train personnel to respond to wildfires and
5 fires in the wildland-urban interface.

6 (2) The effectiveness of such training.

7 (3) Obstacles that prevent the coordination de-
8 scribed in section 3(a)(2)(A), with specific case stud-
9 ies to illustrate such obstacles.

10 (b) DEFINITION OF APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL
11 COMMITTEES.—In this Act, the term “appropriate con-
12 gressional committees” means the following:

13 (1) The Committee on Agriculture of the House
14 of Representatives.

15 (2) The Committee on Natural Resources of the
16 House of Representatives.

17 (3) The Committee on Science, Space, and
18 Technology of the House of Representatives.

19 (4) The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition,
20 and Forestry of the Senate.

21 (5) The Committee on Energy and Natural Re-
22 sources of the Senate.

23 (6) The Committee on Homeland Security and
24 Governmental Affairs of the Senate.

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