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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

To address wildfire readiness and recovery, safe communities, and wildland
firefighter safety.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. NEGUSE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To address wildfire readiness and recovery, safe communities,
and wildland firefighter safety.

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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Wildfire Response and Readiness Act”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
7 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

DIVISION A—RESILIENT LANDSCAPES

TITLE I—NATIONAL PRESCRIBED FIRE PROGRAM

Sec. 11001. Definitions.

Subtitle A—Uses of Funds

Sec. 11101. Definition of prescribed fire.

Sec. 11102. Prescribed fire funding.

Sec. 11103. Policies and practices.

Sec. 11104. Collaborative prescribed fire program.

Subtitle B—Facilitating Implementation and Outreach

Sec. 11201. Cooperative agreements and contracts.

Sec. 11202. Human resources.

Sec. 11203. Liability of prescribed fire managers.

Sec. 11204. Environmental review.

Sec. 11205. Prescribed fire education program.

Subtitle C—Reporting

Sec. 11301. Annual reports to National Fire Planning and Operations Database.

Sec. 11302. Annual implementation report.

TITLE II—RESTORATION, RECOVERY, AND REFORESTATION

Subtitle A—Landscape Restoration

Sec. 12101. Collaborative forest landscape restoration program reauthorization.

Sec. 12102. Joint Chiefs landscape restoration partnership program.

Sec. 12103. Contracts, grants, and agreements to carry out certain ecosystem restoration activities.

Sec. 12104. Post-Disaster Reforestation and Restoration Program.

Sec. 12105. Emergency forest watershed program.

Sec. 12106. Nursery and seed orchard support.

Sec. 12107. Requirements related to payment timing for certain programs addressing wildfire damages.

Sec. 12108. Permits and agreements with electrical utilities.

Sec. 12109. Post-fire management and recovery.

Sec. 12110. Long-term burned area rehabilitation account.

Sec. 12111. Prize for wildfire-related invasive species reduction.

Sec. 12112. Protection of inventoried roadless areas.

Subtitle B—10-Year Wildfire Plan

Sec. 12201. Definitions.

Sec. 12202. Implementation of 10-year national wildfire plan.

Sec. 12203. Selection and implementation of landscape-scale forest restoration projects.

Sec. 12204. Youth and conservation corps assistance with projects under the plan.

Sec. 12205. Ecosystem restoration grant fund through national fish and wildlife foundation.

Sec. 12206. Report on 10-year national wildfire plan implementation.

DIVISION B—FIRE-ADAPTED COMMUNITIES

TITLE I—COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND HOME HARDENING

Subtitle A—Grant Programs for Wildfire Resilience

- Sec. 21101. Updating list of at-risk communities.
- Sec. 21102. Amendment to community wildfire defense grant program to allow structure hardening.
- Sec. 21103. Additional amounts for community wildfire defense grant program.
- Sec. 21104. Improvements to grant programs for community wildfire risk reduction and postfire recovery efforts.
- Sec. 21105. Improvements to FEMA programs.
- Sec. 21106. Individual household disaster mitigation program.

Subtitle B—Reports

- Sec. 21201. Community protection and resilience report.
- Sec. 21202. Community wildfire resilience and insurance coverage study.
- Sec. 21203. Shrubland wildfire mitigation study.
- Sec. 21204. Emergency authorities report.
- Sec. 21205. Wildland fire performance metrics.

TITLE II—EFFECTIVE WILDFIRE RESPONSE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Sec. 22001. Monitoring wildfires by satellite.
- Sec. 22002. Requirements relating to certain fire suppression cost share agreements.
- Sec. 22003. Wildfire Science and Technology Advisory Board.
- Sec. 22004. Improvements to wildfire forage loss programs.
- Sec. 22005. Joint Office of the Fire Environment Center.
- Sec. 22006. Interagency data collaboration environment.
- Sec. 22007. Study on wildfire mitigation across land ownership boundaries.
- Sec. 22008. Quadrennial fire review.
- Sec. 22009. The Wildland Dynamic Risk Mapping Program.
- Sec. 22010. Report on radio communications.
- Sec. 22011. Resilience accelerator demonstration program.
- Sec. 22012. Wildfire detection equipment.
- Sec. 22013. Research and development of unmanned aircraft system fire applications.

TITLE III—WILDFIRE SMOKE AND PUBLIC HEALTH

- Sec. 23001. National smoke monitoring and alert system.
- Sec. 23002. Health risk assessment for wildfire smoke exposure.

DIVISION C—AGENCY MODERNIZATION AND FIREFIGHTER SAFETY

TITLE I—WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Sec. 31001. Middle Fire Leaders Academy.
- Sec. 31002. Wildfire workforce grant program.
- Sec. 31003. Civilian conservation centers.
- Sec. 31004. Pilot program to employ veterans in positions relating to Federal wildland firefighting activities.

TITLE II—STAFF SAFETY AND SUPPORT

Subtitle A— Tim Hart Wildland Firefighter Support

- Sec. 32101. Special limitations on pay for wildland firefighters.
Sec. 32102. Rest and recuperation leave for employees engaged in wildland firefighting.
Sec. 32103. Health provisions.
Sec. 32104. Retirement for firefighters.
Sec. 32105. Pay parity for Federal structural firefighters.
Sec. 32106. Pay adjustments and other matters.
Sec. 32107. Wildland fire management casualty assistance program.
Sec. 32108. Continuing accrual of service for firefighters.

Subtitle B—Federal Workforce Stability

- Sec. 32201. Prohibition on reductions in force and involuntary separations at Department of the Interior and United States Forest Service.
Sec. 32202. Prohibition on closure of forest service research and development facilities.

1 **DIVISION A—RESILIENT**
2 **LANDSCAPES**
3 **TITLE I—NATIONAL**
4 **PRESCRIBED FIRE PROGRAM**

5 **SEC. 11001. DEFINITIONS.**

6 In this title:

7 (1) **CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term
8 “congressional committees” means—

9 (A) the Committee on Energy and Natural
10 Resources, the Committee on Agriculture, Nu-
11 trition, and Forestry, and the Committee on
12 Appropriations of the Senate; and

13 (B) the Committee on Natural Resources,
14 the Committee on Agriculture, and the Com-
15 mittee on Appropriations of the House of Rep-
16 resentatives.

17 (2) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “Federal land”
18 means—

1 (A) land under the jurisdiction of the Sec-
2 retary of the Interior; and

3 (B) National Forest System land.

4 (3) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
5 has the meaning given such term in section 4 of the
6 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
7 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

8 (4) LANDSCAPE-SCALE PRESCRIBED FIRE
9 PLAN.—The term “landscape-scale prescribed fire
10 plan” means a decision document prepared pursuant
11 to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
12 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) that—

13 (A) covers a unit of the National Forest
14 System, a Bureau of Land Management dis-
15 trict, or a subunit of such a unit or district;

16 (B) analyzes the site-specific environmental
17 consequences of prescribed fire on land de-
18 scribed in subparagraph (A); and

19 (C) obviates the need for subsequent deci-
20 sions pursuant to the National Environmental
21 Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.)
22 with respect to the unit, district, or subunit de-
23 scribed in subparagraph (A).

24 (5) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “National
2 Forest System” has the meaning given the term
3 in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland
4 Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
5 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

6 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “National
7 Forest System” does not include the national
8 grasslands or land utilization projects adminis-
9 tered under title III of the Bankhead-Jones
10 Farm Tenant Act (7 U.S.C. 1010 et seq.).

11 (6) PRESCRIBED FIRE.—The term “prescribed
12 fire” means a fire deliberately ignited to burn
13 wildland fuels in a natural or modified state—

14 (A) under specified environmental condi-
15 tions that are intended to allow the fire to be
16 confined to a predetermined area and produce
17 the fireline intensity and rate of spread re-
18 quired to attain planned resource management
19 objectives; and

20 (B) in accordance with applicable law (in-
21 cluding regulations).

22 (7) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
23 means—

24 (A) the Secretary of the Interior; and

25 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture.

1 (8) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
2 retary concerned” means—

3 (A) the Secretary of the Interior, in the
4 case of land under the jurisdiction of the Sec-
5 retary of the Interior; and

6 (B) the Secretary of Agriculture, in the
7 case of land under the jurisdiction of the Sec-
8 retary of Agriculture.

9 **Subtitle A—Uses of Funds**

10 **SEC. 11101. DEFINITION OF PRESCRIBED FIRE.**

11 In this subtitle, the term “prescribed fire” has the
12 meaning given the term in section 11001, except that in
13 this subtitle the term does not include a fire that is ignited
14 for the primary purpose of pile burning.

15 **SEC. 11102. PRESCRIBED FIRE FUNDING.**

16 (a) FUNDING FLEXIBILITY.—

17 (1) DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—The Sec-
18 retary of Agriculture may use not more than 15 per-
19 cent of funds appropriated for each fiscal year for
20 hazardous fuels management in the National Forest
21 System for activities described in subsection (b).

22 (2) DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.—The
23 Secretary of the Interior may use not more than 15
24 percent of funds appropriated for each fiscal year
25 for hazardous fuels management and post-fire activi-

1 ties in the account for wildland fire management of
2 the Department of the Interior for activities de-
3 scribed in subsection (b).

4 (b) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES.—The activities re-
5 ferred to in subsection (a) are—

6 (1) with respect to prescribed fires on Federal
7 land, or on non-Federal land if the Secretary con-
8 cerned determines that such activities would benefit
9 resources on Federal land—

10 (A) entering into procurement contracts or
11 cooperative agreements for prescribed fire ac-
12 tivities;

13 (B) issuing grants to a State, Tribal Gov-
14 ernment, local government, prescribed fire
15 council, prescribed burn association, or non-
16 profit organization for the implementation of
17 prescribed fires, including—

18 (i) carrying out necessary environ-
19 mental reviews;

20 (ii) carrying out any site preparation
21 necessary for implementing prescribed
22 fires; and

23 (iii) conducting any required pre-igni-
24 tion cultural or environmental surveys; and

1 (C) conducting outreach to the public, In-
2 dian Tribes and beneficiaries, and adjacent
3 landowners;

4 (2) implementing prescribed fires on non-Fed-
5 eral land, if the Secretary concerned determines that
6 the prescribed fire would benefit Federal land, in-
7 cluding—

8 (A) carrying out necessary environmental
9 reviews;

10 (B) carrying out any site preparation nec-
11 essary for implementing prescribed fires; and

12 (C) conducting any required pre-ignition
13 cultural and environmental surveys;

14 (3) providing to Federal employees and co-
15 operators training for prescribed fire and basic
16 smoke management practices;

17 (4) conducting post-prescribed fire activities,
18 such as monitoring for hazard trees or reignitions
19 and invasive species management;

20 (5) providing technical or financial assistance to
21 a State, Tribal Government, local government, pre-
22 scribed fire council, prescribed burn association, or
23 nonprofit organization for the purpose of providing
24 training for prescribed fire or basic smoke manage-
25 ment practices, consistent with any standards devel-

1 oped by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group
2 or State prescribed fire standards; and

3 (6) providing funding for the applicable Col-
4 laborative Prescribed Fire Program established
5 under section 11104.

6 (c) PRIORITIZATION.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
8 the Secretary concerned shall coordinate with the
9 other Secretary concerned, State and local govern-
10 ment agencies, Indian Tribes, and applicable non-
11 governmental organizations to establish
12 prioritization criteria for expending amounts pursu-
13 ant to subsection (a) for activities described in para-
14 graphs (2), (5), and (6) of subsection (b).

15 (2) REQUIREMENT.—In establishing criteria
16 under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall
17 give priority to a project that is—

18 (A) implemented across a large contiguous
19 area;

20 (B) cross-boundary in nature;

21 (C) in an area that is—

22 (i) within or adjacent to the wildland-
23 urban interface and identified as a priority
24 area in a statewide forest action plan or
25 Community Wildfire Protection Plan; or

- 1 (ii) identified as important to the pro-
2 tection of a Tribal trust resource or the re-
3 served or treaty rights of an Indian Tribe;
4 (D) on land that is at high or very high
5 risk of experiencing a wildfire that would be dif-
6 ficult to suppress;
7 (E) in an area that is designated as critical
8 habitat and in need of ecological restoration or
9 enhancement that can be achieved with the aid
10 of prescribed fire; or
11 (F) supportive of potential operational de-
12 lineations or strategic response zones.

13 **SEC. 11103. POLICIES AND PRACTICES.**

14 (a) INCREASING PRESCRIBED FIRE.—Beginning with
15 the first fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment
16 of this Act, and for each of the 9 fiscal years thereafter,
17 the Secretaries shall conduct prescribed fires on Federal
18 land such that the total acreage of Federal land on which
19 prescribed fires are conducted is 10 percent greater than
20 the total acreage of all Federal land on which prescribed
21 fires were conducted during the preceding fiscal year.

22 (b) OPERATIONAL STRATEGY.—The Secretary con-
23 cerned shall develop, in coordination with State, local, and
24 Tribal governments, a prescribed fire operational strategy

1 for each region of the National Forest System or the De-
2 partment of the Interior, as applicable, that describes—

3 (1) the fire deficit by region; and

4 (2) staffing and funding needs to address the
5 fire deficit under paragraph (1).

6 **SEC. 11104. COLLABORATIVE PRESCRIBED FIRE PROGRAM.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned, in co-
8 ordination with the other Secretary concerned, shall estab-
9 lish a Collaborative Prescribed Fire Program (referred to
10 in this section as the “program”) to select and fund pre-
11 scribed fire projects (each of which is referred to in this
12 section as a “project”) in accordance with—

13 (1) the prioritization criteria established under
14 section 11102(c);

15 (2) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16
16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

17 (3) the National Environmental Policy Act of
18 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

19 (4) the applicable land use or land management
20 plan; and

21 (5) any other applicable law.

22 (b) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA.—To be eligible for nomi-
23 nation under subsection (c), a proposal for a project
24 shall—

1 (1) be consistent with a landscape restoration
2 strategy—

3 (A) that is complete or substantially com-
4 plete;

5 (B) that identifies and prioritizes pre-
6 scribed fire treatments for a 10-year period
7 within a landscape that is—

8 (i) not less than 50,000 acres;

9 (ii) composed primarily of forested
10 Federal land under the jurisdiction of the
11 Secretary concerned, but may also include
12 other Federal, State, Tribal, or private
13 land, if a treatment on that land would
14 benefit the applicable Federal land; and

15 (iii) in need of—

16 (I) active ecosystem restoration;

17 or

18 (II) maintenance activities to re-
19 tain previously treated land in a wild-
20 fire-resilient state;

21 (C) that incorporates the best available
22 science and scientific application tools to iden-
23 tify project areas;

24 (D) that fully maintains, or contributes to-
25 ward the restoration of, the structure and com-

1 position of old growth stands according to the
2 pre-fire suppression old growth conditions char-
3 acteristic of the forest type—

4 (i) taking into account the contribu-
5 tion of the stand to landscape fire adapta-
6 tion and watershed health; and

7 (ii) retaining the large trees contrib-
8 uting to old growth structure;

9 (E) under which would be carried out any
10 forest restoration treatments that reduce haz-
11 ardous fuels through the use of fire for ecologi-
12 cal restoration and maintenance and reestab-
13 lishing natural fire regimes, where appropriate,
14 which—

15 (i) may include site preparation, if
16 necessary to prepare the landscape for re-
17 establishment of a natural fire regime; and

18 (ii) shall maximize the retention of
19 large trees, as appropriate for the forest
20 type, to the extent that the trees promote
21 fire-resilient stands; and

22 (F) under which—

23 (i) no permanent roads would be es-
24 tablished; and

1 (ii) funding would be committed to de-
2 commission all temporary roads con-
3 structed to carry out the strategy;

4 (2) be developed and implemented through a
5 collaborative process that—

6 (A) includes multiple interested persons
7 representing diverse interests; and

8 (B) is transparent and nonexclusive;

9 (3) describe plans, as applicable—

10 (A) to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic
11 wildfire;

12 (B) to improve fish and wildlife habitat, in-
13 cluding for endangered, threatened, and sen-
14 sitive species;

15 (C) to maintain or improve water quality
16 and watershed function;

17 (D) to prevent, remediate, or control inva-
18 sions of exotic species;

19 (E) to maintain, decommission, and reha-
20 bilitate roads and trails;

21 (F) to report annually on performance, in-
22 cluding setting accomplishment targets for each
23 year;

24 (G) to take into account any applicable
25 community wildfire protection plan; and

1 (H) to mitigate smoke impacts on nearby
2 communities;

3 (4) include an analysis of any anticipated cost
4 savings, including savings resulting from—

5 (A) a reduced risk of wildfire damages, es-
6 pecially to high-value resources; and

7 (B) a decrease in the unit costs of imple-
8 menting ecological restoration treatments over
9 time;

10 (5) include estimates of—

11 (A) the amount of annual Federal funding
12 necessary to implement the proposed project;
13 and

14 (B) the amount of new non-Federal invest-
15 ment for carrying out the proposed project that
16 would be leveraged;

17 (6) describe the collaborative process described
18 in paragraph (2) through which the proposal was de-
19 veloped, including a description of—

20 (A) participation by, or consultation with,
21 State, local, and Tribal governments; and

22 (B) any established record of successful
23 collaborative planning and implementation of
24 prescribed fire projects on National Forest Sys-

1 tem land and other land included in the pro-
2 posal by the collaborators;

3 (7) propose to benefit local economies by pro-
4 viding local employment or training opportunities
5 through contracts, grants, or agreements for plan-
6 ning, design, implementation, or monitoring with—

7 (A) local private, nonprofit, or cooperative
8 entities;

9 (B) Youth Conservation Corps crews or re-
10 lated partnerships with State, local, and non-
11 profit youth groups;

12 (C) existing or proposed small or micro
13 businesses, clusters, or incubators; or

14 (D) other entities that will hire or train
15 local individuals to complete those contracts,
16 grants, or agreements; and

17 (8) be subject to any other requirements that
18 the Secretary concerned determines to be necessary
19 for the efficient and effective administration of the
20 program.

21 (c) NOMINATION PROCESS.—

22 (1) SUBMISSION.—A proposal for a project
23 shall be submitted to the appropriate Regional For-
24 ester, State Director, or other similar official.

25 (2) NOMINATION.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—An official described in
2 paragraph (1) may nominate for selection by
3 the Secretary concerned any proposals received
4 by the official under that paragraph that meet
5 the eligibility criteria described in subsection
6 (b).

7 (B) CONCURRENCE.—In the case of a pro-
8 posal for a project that involves activities on the
9 land of both Secretaries, a nomination under
10 subparagraph (A) shall include the concurrence
11 of the appropriate official for the applicable
12 land that is not under the jurisdiction of the of-
13 ficial nominating the proposal.

14 (3) OTHER LAND.—In the case of a proposal
15 for a project that involves activities on land that is
16 not under the jurisdiction of either Secretary con-
17 cerned, a nomination under subparagraph (A) shall
18 include evidence that the landowner intends to par-
19 ticipate in, and provide appropriate funding to carry
20 out, the activities.

21 (d) SELECTION PROCESS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned, in
23 consultation with the other Secretary concerned,
24 shall select for implementation proposals for
25 projects—

1 (A) that have been nominated under sub-
2 section (c)(2);

3 (B) that meet the eligibility criteria de-
4 scribed in subsection (b); and

5 (C) in accordance with the prioritization
6 criteria established under section 11102(c).

7 (2) CRITERIA.—In selecting proposals under
8 paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall give
9 special consideration to—

10 (A) the strength of the proposal, including
11 the landscape restoration strategy described in
12 subsection (b)(1) of the proposal;

13 (B) the strength of the ecological case of
14 the proposal and the proposed ecological res-
15 toration strategies under the proposal;

16 (C) the strength of the collaborative proc-
17 ess described in subsection (b)(2) through
18 which the proposal was developed and the likeli-
19 hood of successful collaboration throughout im-
20 plementation;

21 (D) the extent to which the proposal is
22 likely to achieve reductions in long-term wildfire
23 risk and increased protection of high-value re-
24 sources;

1 (E) the extent to which an appropriate
2 level of non-Federal investment would be lever-
3 aged in carrying out the proposed project; and

4 (F) ensuring geographic diversity of
5 projects implemented under this section.

6 (3) LIMITATION.—The Secretary concerned
7 may select not more than—

8 (A) 20 proposals under paragraph (1) to
9 be funded during any fiscal year; and

10 (B) the number of proposals under para-
11 graph (1) that the Secretary concerned deter-
12 mines are likely to receive adequate funding.

13 (e) REPORTING.—

14 (1) PROJECT REPORTING.—A recipient of fi-
15 nancial assistance to carry out a project under the
16 program shall annually submit to the Secretary con-
17 cerned a report summarizing, at a minimum, with
18 respect to the year covered by the report—

19 (A) the number of acres of land treated
20 with prescribed fire by the recipient under the
21 program; and

22 (B) the amount of Federal and non-Fed-
23 eral funds used by the recipient under the pro-
24 gram.

1 (2) PROGRAM REPORT.—Not later than 5 years
2 after the first fiscal year in which funding is made
3 available to carry out projects under the program,
4 and every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary con-
5 cerned shall submit to the congressional committees
6 a report describing the program, including an as-
7 sessment of whether, and to what extent, the pro-
8 gram is fulfilling the purposes of this section.

9 (f) LIMITATIONS.—

10 (1) TOTAL FUNDING.—The Secretary concerned
11 shall not provide more than \$20,000,000 in total
12 funding for projects under the program in any fiscal
13 year.

14 (2) PROJECT SIZE LIMITATION.—The Secretary
15 concerned shall not provide more than \$1,000,000
16 for any 1 project under the program in any fiscal
17 year.

18 (3) PROJECT SUNSET.—The Secretary con-
19 cerned shall not provide funding for a project under
20 the program for a period of more than 10 fiscal
21 years.

22 (4) PROJECT CANCELLATION.—The Secretary
23 concerned shall cease funding any project under the
24 program that, for 3 consecutive years, fails to meet

1 the annual accomplishment targets set under sub-
2 section (b)(3)(F).

3 (g) FUNDING.—Of the amounts made available under
4 section 11102(a), the Secretary concerned may use to
5 carry out this section not more than \$10,000,000 for each
6 of fiscal years 2027 through 2036.

7 **Subtitle B—Facilitating**
8 **Implementation and Outreach**

9 **SEC. 11201. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS.**

10 (a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this sec-
11 tion, the term “eligible entity” means—

- 12 (1) a State;
13 (2) an Indian Tribe;
14 (3) a county or municipal government;
15 (4) a fire district;
16 (5) a nongovernmental organization; and
17 (6) a private entity.

18 (b) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary concerned may
19 enter into a cooperative agreement or contract with an eli-
20 gible entity to authorize the eligible entity to coordinate,
21 plan, or conduct a prescribed fire on Federal land in ac-
22 cordance with other applicable laws, regulations, and land
23 management plans.

24 (c) SUBCONTRACTS.—The Secretary concerned may
25 authorize a State, an Indian Tribe, or a county that enters

1 into a cooperative agreement or contract under subsection
2 (b) to enter into a subcontract to conduct a prescribed
3 fire on Federal land pursuant to that cooperative agree-
4 ment or contract, subject to any other terms and condi-
5 tions that the Secretary concerned determines to be appro-
6 priate.

7 (d) LONG-TERM CONTRACTS.—A cooperative agree-
8 ment or contract with an eligible entity under subsection
9 (b) may authorize the eligible entity to conduct a series
10 of prescribed fires on Federal land for a period of not
11 longer than 10 years.

12 **SEC. 11202. HUMAN RESOURCES.**

13 (a) PRESCRIBED FIRE WORKFORCE.—

14 (1) INCREASING WORKFORCE RETENTION.—

15 (A) HAZARD PAY.—

16 (i) IN GENERAL.—Each Federal em-
17 ployee in any classification series, as iden-
18 tified by the Secretaries, shall be entitled
19 to be paid the appropriate differential
20 under section 5545(d) of title 5, United
21 States Code, as if such employee was cov-
22 ered by such subsection, when such em-
23 ployee carries out work directly related to
24 the ignition, management, and control of a
25 prescribed fire.

1 (ii) REGULATIONS.—The Director of
2 the Office of Personnel Management shall
3 prescribe regulations to carry out this sub-
4 paragraph.

5 (B) INCENTIVE PAYMENTS FOR FUELS AS-
6 SIGNMENTS.—The Secretaries shall submit to
7 the congressional committees a joint report de-
8 scribing mechanisms to attract and retain a
9 skilled fuels workforce, including pay incentives
10 that would account for and offset the more
11 competitive pay options offered through wildfire
12 suppression assignments.

13 (2) DEDICATED PRESCRIBED FIRE TASK
14 FORCES.—

15 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall—
16 (i) not later than 180 days after the
17 date of enactment of this Act, establish at
18 least 1 multiparty task force of Federal
19 employees and non-Federal entities within
20 each Geographic Area Coordination Center
21 to plan, lead, and support prescribed fire
22 across ownership boundaries that are pri-
23 orities at the landscape, region, State, or
24 Federal level; and

1 (ii) support each task force estab-
2 lished under clause (i) by assigning a dedi-
3 cated Federal employee—

4 (I) to aid necessary administra-
5 tive functions relating to partnership
6 agreements; and

7 (II) to coordinate prescribed fire
8 across ownership boundaries.

9 (B) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The
10 Secretaries may enter into 1 or more coopera-
11 tive agreements to carry out this paragraph.

12 (3) CONVERSION OF SEASONAL FIREFIGHTERS
13 TO PERMANENT EMPLOYEES.—The Secretaries may
14 noncompetitively convert a Federal seasonal em-
15 ployee to a Federal permanent employee if—

16 (A) the listed job duties of the employee
17 include wildland firefighting;

18 (B) the employee received a rating of at
19 least “Fully Successful” in each of the perform-
20 ance appraisals of the employee for the 3 most
21 recent seasons of Federal employment of the
22 employee; and

23 (C) the job duties and performance stand-
24 ards of the position into which the permanent

1 employee converts emphasize implementing pre-
2 scribed fires.

3 (4) EMPLOYMENT OF FORMERLY INCARCER-
4 ATED INDIVIDUALS.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries, in
6 consultation with the Attorney General and
7 State departments of corrections, shall seek to
8 provide career pathways, training, and wrap-
9 around support services, including through
10 partnerships with the Corps Network, to indi-
11 viduals described in subparagraph (B) to work
12 as prescribed fire practitioners.

13 (B) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—An indi-
14 vidual referred to in subparagraph (A) is an in-
15 dividual that—

16 (i) has been convicted in any court of
17 a criminal offense, other than arson or a
18 violent crime (as defined by the Secre-
19 taries, in consultation with the Attorney
20 General and State departments of correc-
21 tions), and was sentenced to a term of im-
22 prisonment for that offense; and

23 (ii) during the term of imprisonment
24 described in clause (i), served on a

1 wildland firefighting crew or received other
2 comparable training.

3 (5) UNDERUTILIZED EMPLOYEES.—The Secre-
4 taries shall support the recruitment, development,
5 and participation of underutilized employees, as de-
6 termined by the Secretaries, in the wildland fire
7 workforce, including by fostering leadership opportu-
8 nities, mentorship networks, and training.

9 (6) VETERANS CREWS.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries, in
11 consultation with the Secretary of Veterans Af-
12 fairs, shall seek—

13 (i) to provide a career pathway to in-
14 dividuals described in subparagraph (B) to
15 work as prescribed fire practitioners; and

16 (ii) to establish crews composed pre-
17 dominantly of veterans to conduct pre-
18 scribed fires.

19 (B) INDIVIDUALS DESCRIBED.—An indi-
20 vidual referred to in subparagraph (A) is an in-
21 dividual who—

22 (i) served in the active military, naval,
23 or air service; and

24 (ii) was discharged or released under
25 conditions other than dishonorable.

1 (b) ADDITIONAL TRAINING CENTERS.—Subject to
2 the availability of appropriations, not later than 2 years
3 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
4 the Interior, in cooperation with the Secretary of Agri-
5 culture (and the Secretary of Defense in the case of a cen-
6 ter located on a military installation), shall—

7 (1) establish, operate, and facilitate a pre-
8 scribed fire training program or center that offers
9 training in prescribed fire within each Geographic
10 Area Coordination Center region where such a pro-
11 gram or center does not exist on the date of enact-
12 ment of this Act; and

13 (2) support the establishment of an Indigenous-
14 led prescribed fire and cultural burning training cen-
15 ter operated by an Indian Tribe or partnership of
16 Indian Tribes.

17 (c) COMPETENCIES FOR FIREFIGHTERS.—The Secre-
18 taries, in coordination with the Fire Executive Council,
19 shall task the National Wildfire Coordinating Group with
20 the duty to adjust training requirements to obtain a cer-
21 tification to serve in a supervisory role for a prescribed
22 fire and any other positions determined to be necessary
23 by the Secretaries—

24 (1) in order to reduce the time required to ob-
25 tain such a certification; and

1 (2) such that significant experience, gained ex-
2 clusively during a prescribed fire, is required to ob-
3 tain such a certification.

4 (d) ENHANCING INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN FED-
5 ERAL AND NON-FEDERAL PRACTITIONERS.—

6 (1) QUALIFICATION DATABASES AND DISPATCH
7 SYSTEMS.—The Secretaries shall establish a collabo-
8 rative process to create mechanisms for non-Federal-
9 agency fire practitioners to be included in prescribed
10 fire and wildfire resource ordering and reimburse-
11 ment processes.

12 (2) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS.—The Secre-
13 taries shall—

14 (A) develop partnership agreements for
15 prescribed fire with all relevant State, Federal,
16 Tribal, university, and nongovernmental entities
17 that choose to be included in resource ordering
18 and reimbursement processes under paragraph
19 (1);

20 (B) create agreements and structures nec-
21 essary to include non-Federal-agency and other
22 nontraditional partners in direct work with
23 Federal agencies to address prescribed fires;
24 and

1 (C) treat any prescribed fire practitioner
2 meeting applicable National Wildfire Coordi-
3 nating Group standards as eligible to be in-
4 cluded in statewide participating agreements.

5 **SEC. 11203. LIABILITY OF PRESCRIBED FIRE MANAGERS.**

6 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 (1) COVERED ACTIVITY.—The term “covered
8 activity” means an activity carried out on Federal
9 land directly related to a wildland fire, prescribed
10 fire, or prescribed fire with cultural objectives in the
11 course of executing a Federal action.

12 (2) COVERED ENTITY.—The term “covered en-
13 tity” means a non-Federal entity engaged in a cov-
14 ered activity, if that non-Federal entity is acting—

15 (A) under the direct supervision of a Fed-
16 eral employee; and

17 (B) within the scope of a contract or
18 agreement in carrying out that covered activity.

19 (b) INDEMNITY OF FEDERAL AND TRIBAL EMPLOY-
20 EES.—The Secretaries, in coordination with the Attorney
21 General, shall develop, for employees involved in covered
22 activities, a voluntary training course describing—

23 (1) liability protections afforded to those em-
24 ployees when acting within the scope of their em-
25 ployment;

1 (2) the limits on any liability protections under
2 paragraph (1); and

3 (3) reimbursements available for qualified em-
4 ployees for professional liability insurance under sec-
5 tion 636 of division A of Public Law 104–208 (5
6 U.S.C. prec. 5941 note).

7 (c) INDEMNITY OF OTHER COOPERATORS.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning on the date of en-
9 actment of this Act, a covered entity shall be consid-
10 ered to be an employee of the Federal Government
11 for purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United
12 States Code (commonly known as the “Federal Tort
13 Claims Act”), while that covered entity is engaged in
14 covered activities.

15 (2) GUIDANCE.—Not later than 1 year after
16 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries,
17 in consultation with the Attorney General, shall
18 issue guidance on the necessary provisions and im-
19 plementation requirements for contracts or agree-
20 ments that would extend liability protections to cov-
21 ered entities under paragraph (1).

22 (3) REIMBURSEMENT.—Beginning in the first
23 fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment
24 of this Act, the Secretaries shall request, through
25 annual appropriations, funds sufficient to reimburse

1 the Treasury for any claims paid during the prior
2 fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1).

3 (d) EFFECT.—Nothing in this section limits or other-
4 wise affects—

5 (1) the application of any statutory or judicial
6 immunity to Federal employees;

7 (2) the application of chapter 171 of title 28,
8 United States Code (commonly known as the “Fed-
9 eral Tort Claims Act”), to Federal employees; or

10 (3) the application of section 314 of Public Law
11 101–512 (25 U.S.C. 5321 note).

12 **SEC. 11204. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.**

13 (a) SMOKE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.—

14 (1) POLICY.—The Secretaries shall ensure that
15 policies, training, and programs of the Secretaries
16 are consistent with this subsection—

17 (A) to facilitate greater use of prescribed
18 fire; and

19 (B) to address public health and safety, in-
20 cluding impacts from smoke from wildfires and
21 prescribed fires.

22 (2) COORDINATION AMONG FEDERAL, TRIBAL,
23 AND STATE AIR QUALITY AGENCIES AND FEDERAL,
24 TRIBAL, AND STATE LAND MANAGEMENT AGEN-
25 CIES.—To facilitate the use of prescribed fire on

1 Federal, State, Tribal, and private land, the Admin-
2 istrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, in
3 cooperation with Federal and State land manage-
4 ment agencies, shall coordinate with State, Tribal,
5 and local air quality agencies that regulate smoke
6 under the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.)—

7 (A) to the maximum extent practicable, to
8 provide State, Tribal, and local air quality
9 agencies with guidance, data, imagery, or mod-
10 eling to support the development of exceptional
11 event demonstrations in accordance with sec-
12 tions 50.14 and 51.930 of title 40, Code of
13 Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

14 (B) to develop archives and automated
15 tools to provide State, Tribal, and local air
16 quality agencies with the data, imagery, and
17 modeling under subparagraph (A);

18 (C) to develop decision support tools for
19 State, Tribal, and local air quality agencies to
20 assist in determining whether an exceptional
21 event demonstration, if the Administrator of the
22 Environmental Protection Agency concurs with
23 such demonstration, would have regulatory sig-
24 nificance;

1 (D) to provide technical assistance, best
2 practices, or templates to States, Indian Tribes,
3 and local governments for use in approving the
4 use of prescribed fire under a State, Tribal, or
5 local government smoke management program;

6 (E)(i) to promote basic smoke manage-
7 ment practices and other best practices to pro-
8 tect the public from wildland fire smoke;

9 (ii) to disseminate information about basic
10 smoke management practices;

11 (iii) to educate landowners that use pre-
12 scribed fire about the importance of—

13 (I) using basic smoke management
14 practices; and

15 (II) including basic smoke manage-
16 ment practices as a component of a pre-
17 scribed fire plan; and

18 (iv) to share with the public, in coordina-
19 tion with other public health agencies, informa-
20 tion about measures that individuals can take
21 to protect themselves from wildland fire smoke;
22 and

23 (F) to develop guidance and tools to
24 streamline the demonstration of a clear causal
25 relationship between prescribed fire smoke and

1 a related exceedance of a national ambient air
2 quality standard.

3 (3) EXCEPTIONAL EVENT DEMONSTRATIONS.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—The appropriate State
5 or Tribal air quality agency (including any local
6 air quality agency delegated authority by a
7 State) may develop and submit to the Adminis-
8 trator of the Environmental Protection Agency
9 an exceptional event demonstration in accord-
10 ance with sections 50.14 and 51.930 of title 40,
11 Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regu-
12 lations), for a prescribed fire.

13 (B) APPROVAL.—The Administrator of the
14 Environmental Protection Agency shall concur
15 with an exceptional event demonstration sub-
16 mitted under subparagraph (A) in accordance
17 with the requirements of sections 50.14 and
18 51.930 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations
19 (or successor regulations). To meet requirement
20 that the applicable prescribed fire was not rea-
21 sonably controllable or preventable and that the
22 applicable prescribed fire was a human activity
23 unlikely to recur, the State or Tribal air quality
24 agency shall demonstrate in that exceptional

1 event demonstration that, at a minimum, the
2 applicable prescribed fire was—

3 (i) conducted in accordance with a
4 State or Tribal smoke management pro-
5 gram or basic smoke management prac-
6 tices; and

7 (ii) consistent with a land or resource
8 management plan with a stated objective
9 to establish, restore, or maintain a sustain-
10 able and resilient ecosystem.

11 (C) DEMONSTRATION ASSISTANCE FOR
12 FEDERAL LAND.—For any prescribed fire con-
13 ducted on Federal land, the Secretary con-
14 cerned—

15 (i) shall assist with the development
16 of an exceptional event demonstration
17 under subparagraph (A) on request of a
18 State or Tribal air quality agency; and

19 (ii) may develop and submit an excep-
20 tional event demonstration under subpara-
21 graph (A) with the concurrence of the ap-
22 plicable State or Tribal air quality agency.

23 (4) PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH.—To address
24 the public health and safety risk of the expanded use
25 of prescribed fire under this title, the Secretaries, in

1 coordination with the Administrator of the Environ-
2 mental Protection Agency and the Director of the
3 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, shall
4 conduct research to improve or develop—

5 (A) wildland fire smoke prediction models;

6 (B) smoke impact display tools for the
7 public and decisionmakers;

8 (C) appropriate, cost-effective, and con-
9 sistent strategies to mitigate the impacts of
10 smoke from prescribed fire on nearby commu-
11 nities;

12 (D) consistent nationally and scientifically
13 supported messages regarding personal protec-
14 tion equipment for the public; and

15 (E) prescribed fire activity tracking and
16 emission inventory systems for planning and
17 post-treatment accountability.

18 (b) DEVELOPMENT OF LANDSCAPE-SCALE FEDERAL
19 PRESCRIBED FIRE PLANS.—

20 (1) INCLUSION OF LANDSCAPE-SCALE PRE-
21 SCRIBED FIRE PLANS.—The Secretary concerned
22 shall, with respect to units of the National Forest
23 System or Bureau of Land Management districts
24 with existing prescribed fire programs—

1 (A) not later than 1 year after the date of
2 enactment of this Act, determine which of those
3 units or districts have landscape-scale pre-
4 scribed fire plans; and

5 (B) not later than 2 years after the date
6 of enactment of this Act—

7 (i) determine whether each plan de-
8 scribed in subparagraph (A) requires revi-
9 sion;

10 (ii) establish a schedule for the revi-
11 sion of each plan described in subpara-
12 graph (A) that requires revision; and

13 (iii) develop landscape-scale prescribed
14 fire plans for any units or districts that do
15 not have landscape-scale prescribed fire
16 plans.

17 (2) ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.—In car-
18 rying out paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned
19 shall—

20 (A) comply with—

21 (i) the National Environmental Policy
22 Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

23 (ii) the Endangered Species Act of
24 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

1 (iii) division A of subtitle III of title
2 54, United States Code; and

3 (iv) any other applicable laws; and

4 (B) consider the site-specific environmental
5 consequences of the landscape-scale prescribed
6 fire decisions under this subsection.

7 (3) COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT.—In car-
8 rying out paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned
9 shall collaborate with diverse actors from academia,
10 Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management re-
11 search and development programs, nongovernmental
12 organizations, cultural fire practitioners, and other
13 entities, as determined appropriate by the Secretary
14 concerned.

15 (4) CONSULTATION WITH INDIAN TRIBES.—The
16 Secretary concerned shall engage in government-to-
17 government consultation with Indian Tribes in com-
18 plying with this subsection.

19 (5) REPORTS.—Not later than 1 year after the
20 date of enactment of this Act, and annually there-
21 after, the Secretary concerned shall submit to Con-
22 gress a report describing the progress of the Sec-
23 retary concerned with respect to carrying out this
24 subsection.

1 **SEC. 11205. PRESCRIBED FIRE EDUCATION PROGRAM.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall carry out a
3 national prescribed fire education program focused on fire
4 ecology and prescribed fire planning and implementation.

5 (b) PROGRAM ELEMENTS.—A prescribed fire edu-
6 cation program under subsection (a) may include—

7 (1) public service advertisements;

8 (2) the use of social media;

9 (3) campaign and educational activities and ma-
10 terials;

11 (4) commercial licensing;

12 (5) character images and appearances; and

13 (6) awards and recognition.

14 **Subtitle C—Reporting**

15 **SEC. 11301. ANNUAL REPORTS TO NATIONAL FIRE PLAN-**
16 **NING AND OPERATIONS DATABASE.**

17 (a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this section is to en-
18 sure an accurate reporting of annual prescribed fire ac-
19 complishments in the United States.

20 (b) COST-SHARE.—Subject to the availability of ap-
21 propriations, the Secretary of the Interior may provide fi-
22 nancial assistance to States to pay a portion of the costs
23 associated with annually reporting to the National Fire
24 Planning and Operations Database (or a successor data-
25 base) the prescribed fire accomplishments of the State.

1 (c) ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDS.—If, by December 31
2 of a calendar year, a State has not submitted to the Na-
3 tional Fire Planning and Operations Database (or a suc-
4 cessor database) a report describing, at a minimum, the
5 number of acres on which uncharacteristic wildfire risk is
6 effectively mitigated using prescribed fire in the State, the
7 State shall not be eligible to receive any amounts made
8 available under this title for the previous fiscal year.

9 **SEC. 11302. ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT.**

10 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
11 of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretaries shall
12 each submit to the congressional committees a report de-
13 scribing the activities carried out under this title.

14 **TITLE II—RESTORATION, RE-**
15 **COVERY, AND REFOREST-**
16 **ATION**

17 **Subtitle A—Landscape Restoration**

18 **SEC. 12101. COLLABORATIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE RES-**
19 **TORATION PROGRAM REAUTHORIZATION.**

20 Section 4003 of the Omnibus Public Land Manage-
21 ment Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303) is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (b)(3)—

23 (A) in subparagraph (D), by striking “spe-
24 cies;” and inserting “species or pathogens;”;

1 (B) in subparagraph (G), by striking
2 “and” at the end;

3 (C) in subparagraph (H), by adding “and”
4 after the semicolon at the end; and

5 (D) by adding at the end the following:

6 “(I) address standardized monitoring ques-
7 tions and indicators;”;

8 (2) in subsection (c)(3)(A)—

9 (A) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the
10 end;

11 (B) in clause (ii), by inserting “and” at
12 the end; and

13 (C) by adding at the end the following:

14 “(iii) include a Federal Government
15 staffing plan for providing support to
16 collaboratives established pursuant to sub-
17 section (b)(2);”;

18 (3) in subsection (d)—

19 (A) in paragraph (2)—

20 (i) in subparagraph (E), by striking
21 “and” at the end;

22 (ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking
23 the period at the end and inserting a semi-
24 colon; and

1 (iii) by adding at the end the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(G) proposals that seek to use innovative
4 implementation mechanisms, including con-
5 servation finance agreements, good neighbor
6 agreements entered into under section 8206 of
7 the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C.
8 2113a), and similar implementation mecha-
9 nisms;

10 “(H) proposals that seek to reduce the risk
11 of uncharacteristic wildfire or increase ecologi-
12 cal restoration activities—

13 “(i) within areas across land owner-
14 ships, including State, Tribal, and private
15 land; and

16 “(ii) within the wildland-urban inter-
17 face (as defined in section 101 of the
18 Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003
19 (16 U.S.C. 6511)); and

20 “(I) proposals that seek to enhance water-
21 shed health and drinking water sources.”; and

22 (B) in paragraph (3)—

23 (i) in subparagraph (A), by striking
24 “10” and inserting “20”; and

1 (ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking
2 “2” and inserting “4”;

3 (4) in subsection (e)(3), by inserting “conflict
4 resolution or collaborative governance,” before “and
5 woody”; and

6 (5) in subsection (f)—

7 (A) in paragraph (4)(B)(ii), by striking
8 “\$4,000,000” and inserting “\$8,000,000”; and

9 (B) in paragraph (6), by striking “2023”
10 and inserting “2034”.

11 **SEC. 12102. JOINT CHIEFS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION**
12 **PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.**

13 Section 40808 of the Infrastructure Investment and
14 Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592d) is amended—

15 (1) in subsection (a)(2)—

16 (A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or”
17 at the end;

18 (B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the
19 period at the end and inserting a semicolon;
20 and

21 (C) by adding at the end the following:

22 “(D) to recover from wildfires; or

23 “(E) to enhance soil, water, and related
24 natural resources.”;

1 (2) in subsection (b), by adding at the end the
2 following:

3 “(3) AGENCY COORDINATION.—In carrying out
4 the Program, the Chief of the Natural Resources
5 Conservation Service shall—

6 “(A) consider corresponding management
7 plans from the Chief of the Forest Service; and

8 “(B) collaborate with the Chief of the For-
9 est Service on forestry science and practice,
10 using the best available science.”;

11 (3) in subsection (d)(1)—

12 (A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting
13 “and post-wildfire impacts” after “wildfire
14 risk”; and

15 (B) in subparagraph (F), by inserting “,
16 as identified in the corresponding State forest
17 action plan or similar priority plan (such as a
18 State wildlife or water plan)” before the semi-
19 colon;

20 (4) in subsection (f), by striking paragraph (2)
21 and inserting the following:

22 “(2) if inconsistent with the prohibitions under
23 the rule of the Forest Service entitled ‘Special
24 Areas; Roadless Area Conservation’ (66 Fed. Reg.
25 3244 (January 12, 2001)), and subparts C and D

1 of part 294 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations,
2 as applicable;” and

3 (5) in subsections (g)(2) and (h)(1), by striking
4 “and 2023” each place it appears and inserting
5 “through 2031”.

6 **SEC. 12103. CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND AGREEMENTS TO**
7 **CARRY OUT CERTAIN ECOSYSTEM RESTORA-**
8 **TION ACTIVITIES.**

9 (a) CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND AGREEMENTS.—Sec-
10 tion 40804 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act
11 (16 U.S.C. 6592a) is amended by adding at the end the
12 following:

13 “(g) CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND AGREEMENTS.—To
14 carry out the ecosystem restoration activities described in
15 subsection (b), the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
16 through the Chief of the Forest Service, may enter into
17 contracts, grants, or agreements with State forestry agen-
18 cies, local private or nonprofit entities, institutions of
19 higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the High-
20 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))), Indian
21 Tribes, and multistate coalitions—

22 “(1) for the collection and maintenance of na-
23 tive seeds, including material from managed seed or-
24 chards; and

1 “(2) for the production of seedlings for revege-
2 tation.”.

3 (b) COLLABORATIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORA-
4 TION PROGRAM.—Section 4003(b)(7) of the Omnibus
5 Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C.
6 7303(b)(7)) is amended—

7 (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A),
8 by inserting “the collection and maintenance of na-
9 tive seeds for revegetation, the production of seed-
10 lings, and” after “or agreements for”;

11 (2) by redesignating subparagraphs (B)
12 through (D) as subparagraphs (C) through (E), re-
13 spectively; and

14 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the fol-
15 lowing:

16 “(B) institutions of higher education (as
17 defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Edu-
18 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).”.

19 **SEC. 12104. POST-DISASTER REFORESTATION AND RES-**
20 **TORATION PROGRAM.**

21 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

22 (1) COVERED AGENCY.—The term “covered
23 agency” means the National Park Service, the
24 United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau

1 of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation,
2 and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

3 (2) COVERED LANDS.—The term “covered
4 lands” means—

5 (A) any Federal land or interest in land
6 administered by a covered agency; or

7 (B) Indian Forest Land or Rangeland.

8 (3) INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND.—
9 The term “Indian Forest Land or Rangeland”
10 means land that—

11 (A) is held in trust by, or with a restriction
12 against alienation by, the United States for an
13 Indian Tribe or a member of an Indian Tribe;
14 and

15 (B)(i)(I) is Indian forest land (as defined
16 in section 304 of the National Indian Forest
17 Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103));
18 or

19 (II) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any
20 similar vegetation; or

21 (ii) formerly had a forest cover or vegeta-
22 tive cover that is capable of restoration.

23 (4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
24 means any Indian or Alaska Native Tribe, band, na-
25 tion, pueblo, village, or community individually iden-

1 tified (including parenthetically) in the list published
2 most recently as of the date of enactment of this Act
3 pursuant to section 104 of the Federally Recognized
4 Indian Tribe List Act of 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

5 (5) NATURAL REGENERATION.—The term “nat-
6 ural regeneration” has the meaning given the term
7 in section 3(e)(4) of the Forest and Rangeland Re-
8 newable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C.
9 1601(e)(4)).

10 (6) REFORESTATION.—The term “reforest-
11 ation” has the meaning given the term in section
12 3(e)(4) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Re-
13 sources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C.
14 1601(e)(4)).

15 (7) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
16 TEES.—The term “relevant congressional commit-
17 tees” means—

18 (A) the Committees on Agriculture and
19 Natural Resources of the House of Representa-
20 tives; and

21 (B) the Committees on Agriculture and
22 Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate.

23 (8) RESTORATION.—The term “restoration”
24 means assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that
25 has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed, including

1 the reestablishment of appropriate plant species
2 composition and community structure.

3 (9) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
4 the Secretary of the Interior.

5 (10) UNPLANNED DISTURBANCE.—The term
6 “unplanned disturbance” means any unplanned dis-
7 turbance that disrupts ecosystem structure or com-
8 position and may include a wildfire, an infestation of
9 insects or disease, or a weather event.

10 (b) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
11 date of the enactment of this Act and annually thereafter,
12 the Secretary, in coordination with the heads of the cov-
13 ered agencies, shall identify covered lands requiring refor-
14 estation and restoration following unplanned disturbances
15 that are unlikely to experience natural regeneration with-
16 out assistance.

17 (c) PRIORITY PROJECTS.—In consultation with the
18 heads of covered agencies, the Secretary—

19 (1) shall propose a list of priority projects for
20 reforestation and restoration for each fiscal year;

21 (2) may carry out priority projects identified in
22 the list in paragraph (1) through—

23 (A) competitively awarded grants;

24 (B) contracts;

1 (C) contracts established under the Indian
2 Self-Determination and Education Assistance
3 Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.); and

4 (D) cooperative agreements, to be awarded
5 in accordance with applicable requirements es-
6 tablished by the Secretary; and

7 (3) may support any grant contract or coopera-
8 tive agreement that may be necessary to ensure ade-
9 quate and appropriate seed and seedling availability
10 to further the objectives of priority projects.

11 (d) OUTREACH.—To fulfill requirements of this sec-
12 tion the heads of covered agencies shall conduct outreach
13 to—

14 (1) Indian Tribes;

15 (2) States;

16 (3) territories;

17 (4) units of local government;

18 (5) Alaska Native organizations;

19 (6) Native Hawaiian organizations;

20 (7) institutions of higher education;

21 (8) Federal agencies with jurisdiction over Fed-
22 eral land adjoining or proximal to priority projects;
23 and

24 (9) other stakeholders as determined by the
25 Secretary.

1 (e) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later
2 than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act,
3 and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the
4 relevant congressional committees a report that includes
5 the following:

6 (1) An accounting of all covered lands requiring
7 reforestation and restoration.

8 (2) A list of priority projects and implementa-
9 tion progress to address reforestation and restora-
10 tion objectives identified.

11 (3) An accounting of grants, contracts, and co-
12 operative agreements established in furtherance of
13 priority projects.

14 (4) Outreach efforts by covered agencies to ad-
15 vance priority projects.

16 (5) Assessments of, and recommendations relat-
17 ing to seed, seedling, and implementation gaps to
18 advance priority projects and opportunities to estab-
19 lish dedicated funding necessary to address any
20 backlog of reforestation and restoration needs.

21 (f) SUNSET.—The authority provided under this sec-
22 tion shall terminate on the date that is 7 years after the
23 date of enactment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 12105. EMERGENCY FOREST WATERSHED PROGRAM.**

2 (a) FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION.—Section
3 404(b) of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C.
4 2204(b)) is amended by inserting “to carry out section
5 401” after “for a fiscal year”.

6 (b) EMERGENCY FOREST WATERSHED PROGRAM.—
7 Title IV of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C.
8 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the fol-
9 lowing:

10 **“SEC. 408. EMERGENCY FOREST WATERSHED PROGRAM.**

11 **“(a) DEFINITIONS.—**In this section:

12 **“(1) EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION**
13 **MEASURES.—**The term ‘emergency watershed pro-
14 tection measures’ means measures that—

15 **“(A)** are necessary to address runoff retar-
16 dation, soil-erosion prevention, and flood miti-
17 gation caused by a natural disaster or any other
18 natural occurrence that has caused a sudden
19 impairment to natural resources on National
20 Forest System land, and the damage, if not
21 treated—

22 **“(i)** would significantly impair or en-
23 danger the natural resources on the Na-
24 tional Forest System land; and

25 **“(ii)** would pose an immediate risk to
26 water resources or loss of life or property

1 downstream of the National Forest System
2 land; and

3 “(B) would maintain or restore forest
4 health and forest-related resources on the Na-
5 tional Forest System land.

6 “(2) NATURAL DISASTER.—The term ‘natural
7 disaster’ has the meaning given the term in section
8 407(a).

9 “(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means
10 the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the For-
11 est Service.

12 “(4) SPONSOR.—The term ‘sponsor’ means—

13 “(A) a State or local government;

14 “(B) an Indian Tribe (as defined in section
15 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
16 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)); and

17 “(C) a water district, water conservation
18 district, water utility, or special district.

19 “(b) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, acting
20 through a sponsor, is authorized to undertake emergency
21 watershed protection measures on National Forest System
22 land.

23 “(c) AGREEMENTS; PAYMENTS.—

24 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter
25 into an agreement with a sponsor and make pay-

1 ments to the sponsor, on request of the sponsor, to
2 carry out emergency watershed protection measures.

3 “(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

4 “(A) PROJECT TIMELINES.—

5 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Following a nat-
6 ural disaster or natural occurrence that ne-
7 cessitates the carrying out of emergency
8 watershed protection measures, the Sec-
9 retary shall execute agreements under
10 paragraph (1) as expeditiously as possible.

11 “(ii) TIMELINE.—A sponsor that has
12 entered into an agreement under para-
13 graph (1) shall complete all emergency wa-
14 tershed protection measures not later than
15 2 years after the conclusion of the applica-
16 ble natural disaster or natural occurrence,
17 as determined by the Secretary, that neces-
18 sitated the carrying out of those measures.

19 “(iii) CONTINUED MONITORING.—A
20 sponsor that has entered into an agree-
21 ment under paragraph (1) may monitor,
22 maintain, repair, or replace emergency wa-
23 tershed protection measures for a period of
24 not more than 3 years following the con-
25 clusion of the natural disaster or natural

1 occurrence, as determined by the Sec-
2 retary, that necessitated the carrying out
3 of those measures when failure to do so
4 would result in unacceptable risk to Na-
5 tional Forest System land or downstream
6 water users.

7 “(B) PAYMENTS.—The Secretary, in ac-
8 cordance with an agreement entered into under
9 paragraph (1)—

10 “(i) may make partial payments prior
11 to completion of the applicable project; and

12 “(ii) shall make final payment for the
13 project not later than 30 days after the
14 date on which the project is completed.

15 “(d) WAIVED MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—The Sec-
16 retary shall waive any matching requirements for pay-
17 ments made under subsection (c)(1).

18 “(e) LIABILITY.—

19 “(1) IN GENERAL.—A sponsor that carries out
20 emergency watershed protection measures pursuant
21 to an agreement under subsection (c)(1) shall not—

22 “(A) be required to indemnify the United
23 States for any liability resulting from carrying
24 out emergency watershed protection measures
25 pursuant to that agreement; or

1 “(B) except as provided in paragraph (2),
2 be liable for injury, loss, or damage resulting
3 from carrying out emergency watershed protec-
4 tion measures pursuant to that agreement.

5 “(2) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this sub-
6 section precludes liability for damages or costs relat-
7 ing to the carrying out of emergency watershed pro-
8 tection measures by a sponsor pursuant to an agree-
9 ment entered into under subsection (c)(1) if the
10 sponsor acted with willful or wanton negligence or
11 reckless conduct in carrying out those measures.

12 “(f) ASSUMPTION OF RISK.—A sponsor that carries
13 out emergency watershed protection measures prior to en-
14 tering into an agreement under subsection (c)(1) shall as-
15 sume the risk of incurring any cost or liability resulting
16 from carrying out those measures.

17 “(g) COORDINATION.—The Chief of the Natural Re-
18 sources Conservation Service shall coordinate on the use
19 of funds distributed under this section and section 403.

20 “(h) NEPA COMPLIANCE.—Emergency watershed
21 protection measures carried out pursuant to this section
22 shall be deemed emergency response actions for purposes
23 of section 220.4(b)(1) of title 36, Code of Federal Regula-
24 tions (or a successor regulation).”.

1 **SEC. 12106. NURSERY AND SEED ORCHARD SUPPORT.**

2 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

3 (1) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term “eligible
4 recipient” means—

5 (A) a State forestry agency;

6 (B) an Indian Tribe; and

7 (C) a private nursery that has experience
8 growing high-quality native trees of appropriate
9 genetic sources in bareroot or container
10 stocktypes specific for reforestation, restoration,
11 or conservation, including native plants and
12 seeds that are of cultural significance to Indian
13 Tribes.

14 (2) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term
15 “National Forest System” has the meaning given
16 the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Range-
17 land Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
18 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

19 (3) NURSERY.—The term “nursery” means a
20 tree or native plant nursery.

21 (4) SEED ORCHARD.—The term “seed orchard”
22 means a tree or native plant seed orchard.

23 (5) STATE.—The term “State” means each of
24 the several States, the District of Columbia, the
25 Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory or
26 possession of the United States.

1 (b) PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION, AND OTHER
2 ASSISTANCE IN SUPPORT OF NURSERIES AND SEED OR-
3 CHARDS.—The Secretary of Agriculture, acting through
4 the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

5 (1) partner with Federal and State agencies,
6 Indian Tribes, institutions of higher education, non-
7 profit organizations, and private nurseries to provide
8 training, technical assistance, and research to nurs-
9 ery and tree establishment programs that support
10 natural regeneration, reforestation, agroforestry, and
11 afforestation;

12 (2) promote information sharing to improve
13 technical knowledge and practices, and to better un-
14 derstand reforestation needs, relating to seeds or
15 seedlings, effects of climate change, tree genetics for
16 resistance to pathogens and drought, and other
17 issues necessary to address all facets of the reforest-
18 ation supply chain;

19 (3) provide technical and financial assistance to
20 international nursery and tree establishment pro-
21 grams through the Forest Service International Pro-
22 grams, the Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry, and
23 the International Institute of Tropical Forestry;

24 (4) collaborate with other relevant Federal de-
25 partments and agencies, including the Foreign Agri-

1 cultural Service of the Department of Agriculture,
2 the United States Agency for International Develop-
3 ment, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service,
4 and international organizations, including the Food
5 and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations,
6 to provide technical and financial assistance related
7 to nurseries and reforestation;

8 (5) coordinate the efforts of the Department of
9 Agriculture—

10 (A) to address the challenges associated
11 with the reforestation supply chain, including
12 workforce development; and

13 (B) to leverage economic development as-
14 sistance for work with private nurseries;

15 (6) expand reforestation supply chains through
16 science and research, seed collection and storage,
17 workforce development, and nursery infrastructure
18 and operations; and

19 (7) shorten the timeline for approval of permits
20 to collect seeds on National Forest System lands.

21 (c) NURSERY AND SEED ORCHARD GRANT PRO-
22 GRAM.—

23 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 2 years
24 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
25 retary shall establish a program to provide grants to

1 eligible recipients to support nurseries and seed or-
2 chards.

3 (2) ALLOWABLE USES.—A recipient of grant
4 funds under paragraph (1) may use such funds to
5 carry out a project comprised of 1 or more of the
6 following:

7 (A) The development, expansion, enhance-
8 ment, or improvement of nursery production ca-
9 pacity or other infrastructure—

10 (i) to improve seed collection and stor-
11 age;

12 (ii) to increase seedling production,
13 storage, and distribution; or

14 (iii) to enhance seedling survival and
15 properly manage tree genetic resources.

16 (B) The establishment or expansion of a
17 nursery or seed orchard, including by acquiring
18 equipment for a nursery or seed orchard.

19 (C) The development or implementation of
20 quality control measures at nurseries or seed
21 orchards.

22 (D) The promotion of workforce develop-
23 ment within any facet of the reforestation sup-
24 ply chain.

1 (E) Any other activity determined appro-
2 priate by the Secretary.

3 (d) REFORESTATION TRUST FUND.—Notwith-
4 standing subsection (d) of section 303 of Public Law 96–
5 451 (16 U.S.C. 1606a), of amounts in the Reforestation
6 Trust Fund established by subsection (a) of that section
7 that are not otherwise obligated, the Secretary may obli-
8 gate not more than \$5,000,000 for each fiscal year to
9 carry out this section.

10 **SEC. 12107. REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO PAYMENT TIMING**
11 **FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS ADDRESSING**
12 **WILDFIRE DAMAGES.**

13 (a) EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM.—
14 Section 407(b) of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16
15 U.S.C. 2206) is amended—

16 (1) by striking “The” and inserting the fol-
17 lowing:

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The”; and

19 (2) by adding at the end the following:

20 “(2) PAYMENTS FOR EMERGENCY MEASURES
21 TO ADDRESS WILDFIRE.—In the case of an applica-
22 tion for a payment by an owner of nonindustrial pri-
23 vate forest land who carries out emergency measures
24 to restore the land after the land is damaged by a
25 wildfire, if the Secretary approves such application,

1 the Secretary shall provide payment to such owner
2 not later than 90 days after the date on which the
3 application was submitted to the Secretary.”.

4 (b) EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROGRAM.—Section
5 403 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C.
6 2203) is amended by adding at the end the following:

7 “(c) PAYMENTS FOR EMERGENCY WATERSHED PRO-
8 TECTION MEASURES TO ADDRESS WILDFIRE DAMAGE.—
9 In the case of an application for a payment for emergency
10 watershed protection measures addressing a sudden im-
11 pairment of a watershed caused by a wildfire, if the Sec-
12 retary approves such application, the Secretary shall pro-
13 vide such payment not later than 90 days after the date
14 on which the application was submitted to the Secretary.”.

15 (c) COMMUNITY FACILITIES DIRECT LOAN AND
16 GRANT PROGRAMS.—

17 (1) DIRECT LOAN PROGRAM.—Section
18 306(a)(1) of the Consolidated Farm and Rural De-
19 velopment Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(19)) is amended
20 by adding at the end the following: “If the Secretary
21 approves an application for an essential community
22 facilities loan under this paragraph that is submitted
23 by an owner of nonindustrial private forest land (as
24 defined in section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act
25 of 1978) who carries out emergency measures (as

1 defined in such section) to restore the land after the
2 land is damaged by a wildfire and the Secretary ap-
3 proves the application, the Secretary shall provide
4 the loan to the owner within 90 days after date the
5 application is submitted.”

6 (2) GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 306(a)(19) of
7 such Act (7 U.S.C. 1926(a)(19)) is amended by add-
8 ing at the end the following:

9 “(C) PAYMENTS FOR EMERGENCY MEAS-
10 URES TO ADDRESS WILDFIRE.—If the Secretary
11 approves an application for a grant under this
12 paragraph that is submitted by an owner of
13 nonindustrial private forest land (as defined in
14 section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act of
15 1978) who carries out emergency measures (as
16 defined in such section) to restore the land
17 after the land is damaged by a wildfire and the
18 Secretary approves the application, the Sec-
19 retary shall provide the grant to the owner
20 within 90 days after date the application is sub-
21 mitted.”.

22 (d) DISASTER RELIEF AND MITIGATION PRO-
23 GRAMS.—The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and
24 Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is
25 amended—

1 (1) in section 203, by adding at the end the fol-
2 lowing:

3 “(m) ASSISTANCE FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION.—If
4 the President approves an application for financial assist-
5 ance under this section to implement predisaster hazard
6 mitigation measures related to the mitigation of wildfires,
7 the President shall provide such assistance within 90 days
8 after the date such application is submitted.”;

9 (2) in section 404, by adding at the end the fol-
10 lowing:

11 “(h) ASSISTANCE FOR WILDFIRE MITIGATION.—If
12 the President approves an application for hazard mitiga-
13 tion assistance under this section that is related to the
14 mitigation of wildfires, the President shall provide such
15 assistance within 90 days after the date such application
16 is submitted.”;

17 (3) in section 407(e), by adding at the end the
18 following:

19 “(3) PAYMENTS RELATED TO WILDFIRE.—Not-
20 withstanding the requirements of paragraphs (1)
21 and (2), if the President approves an application for
22 a grant under this section to remove debris or
23 wreckage resulting from a wildfire, such grant shall
24 be paid in full no later than the date that is 90 days
25 after the last day such wildfire occurred.”.

1 (4) in section 408—

2 (A) in subsection (f)—

3 (i) in paragraph (3)(B)(iv), by strik-
4 ing “(j)” and inserting “(k)”; and

5 (ii) in paragraph (3)(B)(v), by strik-
6 ing “(i)” and inserting “(j)”;

7 (B) by redesignating subsections (i) and (j)
8 as subsections (j) and (k), respectively; and

9 (C) by inserting after subsection (h) the
10 following:

11 “(i) PAYMENTS RELATED TO WILD-
12 FIRE.—If the President approves an appli-
13 cation for financial assistance under this
14 section for necessary expenses or serious
15 needs related to a wildfire, the President
16 shall provide such assistance within 90
17 days after the last day such wildfire oc-
18 curred.”.

19 (e) SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DISASTER
20 LOAN PROGRAM.—The Small Business Administration
21 Disaster Loan program under section 7(b) of the Small
22 Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)) is amended—

23 (1) by redesignating the second paragraph (16)
24 (relating to statute of limitations) as paragraph
25 (17); and

1 (2) by inserting after paragraph (17) (as so re-
2 designated), the following new paragraph:

3 “(18) EMERGENCY MEASURES TO ADDRESS
4 WILDFIRE.—If the Administrator approves an appli-
5 cation for a loan under this subsection that is sub-
6 mitted by an owner of nonindustrial private forest
7 land (as defined in section 407 of the Agricultural
8 Credit Act of 1978) who carries out emergency
9 measures (as defined in such section) to restore the
10 land after the land is damaged by a wildfire, the Ad-
11 ministrator shall ensure that such loan is disbursed
12 not later than 90 days after date of such approval.”.

13 **SEC. 12108. PERMITS AND AGREEMENTS WITH ELECTRICAL**
14 **UTILITIES.**

15 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 (1) COVERED FEDERAL LANDS.—The term
17 “covered Federal lands” means—

18 (A) National Forest System lands; and

19 (B) lands managed by the Bureau of Land
20 Management.

21 (2) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
22 retary concerned” means—

23 (A) with respect to National Forest Sys-
24 tem lands, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting
25 through the Chief of the Forest Service; and

1 (B) with respect to lands managed by the
2 Bureau of Land Management, the Secretary of
3 the Interior, acting through the Director of the
4 Bureau of Land Management.

5 (b) IN GENERAL.—In any special use permit or ease-
6 ment on covered Federal lands provided to an electrical
7 utility, the Secretary concerned may provide permission to
8 cut and remove trees or other vegetation from within the
9 vicinity of distribution lines or transmission lines without
10 requiring a separate timber sale, if that cutting and re-
11 moval is consistent with—

12 (1) any applicable land and resource manage-
13 ment plan; and

14 (2) other applicable environmental laws (includ-
15 ing regulations).

16 (c) USE OF PROCEEDS.—A special use permit or
17 easement that includes permission for cutting and removal
18 described in subsection (b) shall include a requirement
19 that, if the applicable electrical utility sells any portion
20 of the material removed under the permit or easement,
21 the electrical utility shall provide to the Secretary con-
22 cerned any proceeds received from the sale, less any trans-
23 portation costs incurred in the sale.

24 (d) EFFECT.—Nothing in subsection (c) shall require
25 the sale of any material removed under a permit or ease-

1 ment that includes permission for cutting and removal de-
2 scribed in subsection (b).

3 **SEC. 12109. POST-FIRE MANAGEMENT AND RECOVERY.**

4 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the
5 date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned
6 shall establish 1 or more permanent Burned Area Emer-
7 gency Response Teams (referred to in this section as a
8 “BAER Team”) to coordinate immediate post-wildfire
9 emergency stabilization and erosion planning efforts.

10 (b) REQUIREMENTS.—A BAER Team shall—

11 (1) survey the landscape affected by a wildfire
12 to determine burn severity;

13 (2) identify and remove, as necessary, dead or
14 dying trees that may pose an immediate hazard to
15 individuals, communities, or critical infrastructure;

16 (3) stabilize or remove hazardous materials re-
17 sulting from a wildfire that may pose an immediate
18 hazard to individuals, communities, or the environ-
19 ment;

20 (4) conduct emergency landscape stabilization
21 and erosion prevention work, prioritizing efforts that
22 ensure public safety;

23 (5) prevent the proliferation and spread of
24 invasive species;

1 (6) assist with informing the public of hazards
2 resulting from a wildfire;

3 (7) collaborate, as necessary, with activities
4 under section 12110; and

5 (8) conduct such other work as the Secretary
6 concerned determines to be necessary.

7 (c) DURATION.—To the maximum extent practicable,
8 a BAER Team shall coordinate and respond to immediate
9 post-wildfire emergency stabilization and erosion planning
10 needs for a period of not more than 1 year after the date
11 of containment of a wildfire.

12 (d) FUNDING.—The Secretary concerned may use to
13 carry out this section funds made available by section
14 40803(c)(16) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs
15 Act (16 U.S.C. 6592(c)(16)).

16 **SEC. 12110. LONG-TERM BURNED AREA REHABILITATION**
17 **ACCOUNT.**

18 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF ACCOUNT.—There is estab-
19 lished in the Treasury of the United States the Long-
20 Term Burned Area Rehabilitation account for the Depart-
21 ment of Agriculture.

22 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
23 are authorized to be appropriated for fiscal year 2027 and
24 each fiscal year thereafter through 2036 for the account
25 established by subsection (a) such sums as are necessary

1 to carry out the activities described in subsection (d), not
2 to exceed \$100,000,000.

3 (c) PRESIDENTIAL BUDGET REQUESTS.—For fiscal
4 year 2028 and each fiscal year thereafter through 2036,
5 the Secretary of Agriculture shall submit through the
6 budget request of the President and in accordance with
7 subsection (b), a request for amounts in the National For-
8 est System appropriation account to carry out the activi-
9 ties described in subsection (d).

10 (d) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—The Secretary of Ag-
11 riculture shall use amounts in the account established by
12 subsection (a) for rehabilitation projects located at sites
13 impacted by a wildfire or post-wildfire flooding primarily
14 on Federal land, but may include areas on non-Federal
15 land, that—

16 (1) restore the functions of an ecosystem, in-
17 cluding—

18 (A) identifying areas where natural regen-
19 eration is unlikely to occur;

20 (B) revegetation and reforestation, includ-
21 ing coordinating any necessary site preparation,
22 and replanting;

23 (C) watershed restoration;

24 (D) invasive species mitigation and re-
25 moval; and

1 (E) wildlife habitat restoration; or

2 (2) repair or replace infrastructure or facilities
3 critical for land management activities.

4 (e) DURATION OF ACTIVITIES.—A rehabilitation
5 project under subsection (d) shall—

6 (1) begin not earlier than the date on which the
7 wildfire was contained; and

8 (2) be completed not later than 5 years after
9 the date on which the wildfire was contained.

10 (f) AGREEMENT AUTHORITY.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture
12 may enter to agreements with non-Federal entities
13 to carry out activities described in subsection (d).

14 (2) COST SHARE.—The non-Federal share of
15 the costs of implementing activities under an agree-
16 ment entered into under paragraph (1)—

17 (A) shall be not more than 20 percent; and

18 (B) may include in-kind contributions.

19 (3) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this sub-
20 section—

21 (A) requires the Secretary of Agriculture
22 to enter into agreements with non-Federal enti-
23 ties to carry out activities described in sub-
24 section (d); or

1 (B) limits the effect of the prioritization
2 requirements under subsection (g).

3 (g) PRIORITIZATION OF FUNDING.—The Secretary of
4 Agriculture shall prioritize, on a nationwide basis, projects
5 for which funding requests are submitted under this sec-
6 tion based on downstream effects on water resources.

7 (h) REPORTING.—Beginning in fiscal year 2027, and
8 each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretary of Agriculture
9 shall annually submit to Congress a report on the burned
10 area recovery work performed using—

11 (1) amounts from the account established by
12 subsection (a);

13 (2) amounts made available under the Act of
14 June 9, 1930 (16 U.S.C. 576 et seq.); and

15 (3) amounts from the Reforestation Trust Fund
16 established by section 303(a) of Public Law 96–451
17 (16 U.S.C. 1606a(a)).

18 **SEC. 12111. PRIZE FOR WILDFIRE-RELATED INVASIVE SPE-**
19 **CIES REDUCTION.**

20 Section 7001(d) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Con-
21 servation, Management, and Recreation Act (16 U.S.C.
22 742b note; Public Law 116–9) is amended—

23 (1) by striking “paragraph (8)(A)” each place
24 it appears and inserting “paragraph (9)(A)”;

1 (2) by striking “paragraph (8)(B)” each place
2 it appears and inserting “paragraph (9)(B)”;

3 (3) by redesignating paragraph (8) as para-
4 graph (9);

5 (4) by inserting after paragraph (7) the fol-
6 lowing:

7 “(8) THEODORE ROOSEVELT GENIUS PRIZE
8 FOR MANAGEMENT OF WILDFIRE-RELATED INVASIVE
9 SPECIES.—

10 “(A) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

11 “(i) BOARD.—The term ‘Board’
12 means the Management of Wildfire-Related
13 Invasive Species Technology Advisory
14 Board established by subparagraph (C)(i).

15 “(ii) PRIZE COMPETITION.—The term
16 ‘prize competition’ means the Theodore
17 Roosevelt Genius Prize for the manage-
18 ment of wildfire-related invasive species es-
19 tablished under subparagraph (B).

20 “(B) AUTHORITY.—Not later than 180
21 days after the date of enactment of the Wildfire
22 Response and Readiness Act, the Secretary
23 shall establish under section 24 of the Steven-
24 son-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980
25 (15 U.S.C. 3719) a prize competition, to be

1 known as the ‘Theodore Roosevelt Genius Prize
2 for the management of wildfire-related invasive
3 species’—

4 “(i) to encourage technological innova-
5 tion with the potential to advance the mis-
6 sion of the National Invasive Species
7 Council with respect to the management of
8 wildfire-related invasive species; and

9 “(ii) to award 1 or more prizes annu-
10 ally for a technological advancement that
11 manages wildfire-related invasive species.

12 “(C) ADVISORY BOARD.—

13 “(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is es-
14 tablished an advisory board, to be known
15 as the ‘Management of Wildfire-Related
16 Invasive Species Technology Advisory
17 Board’.

18 “(ii) COMPOSITION.—The Board shall
19 be composed of not fewer than 9 members
20 appointed by the Secretary, who shall pro-
21 vide expertise in—

22 “(I) invasive species;

23 “(II) biology;

24 “(III) technology development;

25 “(IV) engineering;

1 “(V) economics;

2 “(VI) business development and
3 management;

4 “(VII) wildfire; and

5 “(VIII) any other discipline, as
6 the Secretary determines to be nec-
7 essary to achieve the purposes of this
8 paragraph.

9 “(iii) DUTIES.—Subject to clause (iv),
10 with respect to the prize competition, the
11 Board shall—

12 “(I) select a topic;

13 “(II) issue a problem statement;

14 “(III) advise the Secretary re-
15 garding any opportunity for techno-
16 logical innovation to manage wildfire-
17 related invasive species; and

18 “(IV) advise winners of the prize
19 competition regarding opportunities to
20 pilot and implement winning tech-
21 nologies in relevant fields, including in
22 partnership with conservation organi-
23 zations, Federal or State agencies,
24 federally recognized Indian Tribes,
25 private entities, and research institu-

1 tions with expertise or interest relat-
2 ing to the management of wildfire-re-
3 lated invasive species.

4 “(iv) CONSULTATION.—In selecting a
5 topic and issuing a problem statement for
6 the prize competition, the Board shall con-
7 sult widely with Federal and non-Federal
8 stakeholders, including—

9 “(I) 1 or more Federal agencies
10 with jurisdiction over the management
11 of invasive species;

12 “(II) 1 or more Federal agencies
13 with jurisdiction over the management
14 of wildfire;

15 “(III) 1 or more State agencies
16 with jurisdiction over the management
17 of invasive species;

18 “(IV) 1 or more State agencies
19 with jurisdiction over the management
20 of wildfire;

21 “(V) 1 or more State, regional,
22 or local wildlife organizations, the
23 mission of which relates to the man-
24 agement of invasive species; and

1 “(VI) 1 or more wildlife con-
2 servation groups, technology compa-
3 nies, research institutions, institutions
4 of higher education, industry associa-
5 tions, or individual stakeholders with
6 an interest in the management of
7 wildfire-related invasive species.

8 “(v) REQUIREMENTS.—The Board
9 shall comply with all requirements under
10 paragraph (9)(A).

11 “(D) ADMINISTRATION BY THE NATIONAL
12 INVASIVE SPECIES COUNCIL.—The Secretary,
13 acting through the Executive Director of the
14 National Invasive Species Council, shall admin-
15 ister the prize competition and perform the du-
16 ties described in paragraph (9)(B)(i).

17 “(E) JUDGES.—

18 “(i) APPOINTMENT.—The Secretary
19 shall appoint not fewer than 3 judges who
20 shall, except as provided in clause (ii), se-
21 lect the 1 or more annual winners of the
22 prize competition.

23 “(ii) DETERMINATION BY SEC-
24 RETARY.—The judges appointed under
25 clause (i) shall not select any annual win-

1 ner of the prize competition if the Sec-
2 retary makes a determination that, in any
3 fiscal year, none of the technological ad-
4 vancements entered into the prize competi-
5 tion merits an award.

6 “(F) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later
7 than 60 days after the date on which a cash
8 prize is awarded under this paragraph, the Sec-
9 retary shall submit to the Committee on Energy
10 and Natural Resources of the Senate and the
11 Committee on Natural Resources of the House
12 of Representatives a report on the prize com-
13 petition that includes—

14 “(i) a statement by the Board that
15 describes the activities carried out by the
16 Board relating to the duties described in
17 subparagraph (C)(iii);

18 “(ii) a description of the 1 or more
19 annual winners of the prize competition;
20 and

21 “(iii) a statement by 1 or more of the
22 judges appointed under subparagraph (E)
23 that explains the basis on which the 1 or
24 more winners of the prize competition was
25 selected.

1 “(G) TERMINATION OF AUTHORITY.—The
2 Board and all authority provided under this
3 paragraph shall terminate on December 31,
4 2028.”; and

5 (5) in paragraph (9) (as so redesignated)—

6 (A) in subparagraph (A), in the matter
7 preceding clause (i), by striking “or (7)(C)(i)”
8 and inserting “(7)(C)(i), or (8)(C)(i)”; and

9 (B) in subparagraph (C)—

10 (i) in clause (i), by inserting “and the
11 amount of the initial cash prize awarded
12 for a year under paragraph (8)” after
13 “subparagraph (B)(i)(IX)”; and

14 (ii) by adding at the end the fol-
15 lowing:

16 “(iii) ADDITIONAL WILDFIRE CASH
17 PRIZES.—If the Secretary determines that
18 funds are available for an additional cash
19 prize under the prize competition under
20 paragraph (8) for a year, the Secretary
21 shall determine the amount of the addi-
22 tional cash prize.”.

1 **SEC. 12112. PROTECTION OF INVENTORIED ROADLESS**
2 **AREAS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture may
4 not authorize road construction, road reconstruction, or
5 logging (including any cutting or removal of trees) in an
6 inventoried roadless area where such activities are prohib-
7 ited by the Roadless Rule.

8 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREA.—The term
10 “inventoried roadless area” means any area in which
11 road construction, road reconstruction, or logging is
12 subject to the Roadless Rule.

13 (2) ROADLESS RULE.—The term “Roadless
14 Rule” means part 294 of title 36, Code of Federal
15 Regulations, as adopted on January 12, 2001, and
16 modified for Idaho on October 16, 2008, and for
17 Colorado on July 3, 2012, and December 19, 2016.

18 **Subtitle B—10-Year Wildfire Plan**

19 **SEC. 12201. DEFINITIONS.**

20 In this subtitle:

21 (1) PLAN.—The term “Plan” means the plan
22 required under section 12202(a).

23 (2) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
24 means the Secretary of Agriculture and the Sec-
25 retary of the Interior.

1 (3) SECRETARY CONCERNED.—The term “Sec-
2 retary concerned” means—

3 (A) the Secretary of Agriculture, with re-
4 spect to National Forest System lands; and

5 (B) the Secretary of the Interior, with re-
6 spect to public lands.

7 **SEC. 12202. IMPLEMENTATION OF 10-YEAR NATIONAL WILD-
8 FIRE PLAN.**

9 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture
10 shall, in coordination with the Secretary of the Interior,
11 implement a 10-year National Wildfire Plan that—

12 (1) includes—

13 (A) hazardous fuels and prescribed fire ac-
14 tivities to address wildfire risk;

15 (B) vegetation, watershed, wildlife and
16 fisheries habitat management to maintain habi-
17 tat and improve ecological conditions, includ-
18 ing—

19 (i) protecting mature and old-growth
20 trees and forests;

21 (ii) maintaining habitat in a way that
22 advances at-risk species recovery conserva-
23 tion; and

1 (iii) completing consultations required
2 under the Endangered Species Act of 1973
3 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

4 (C) management of recreation, heritage,
5 and wilderness programs;

6 (D) activities under the Joint Fire Science
7 Program to address wildfire risk;

8 (E) the activities required under this sub-
9 title;

10 (F) the activities included in—

11 (i) the National Cohesive Wildland
12 Fire Management Strategy (and successor
13 documents);

14 (ii) the Wildfire Crisis Strategy enti-
15 tled “Confronting the Wildfire Crisis: A
16 Strategy for Protecting Communities and
17 Improving Resilience in America’s For-
18 ests” and dated January 2022 (and suc-
19 cessor documents);

20 (iii) the Wildfire Crisis Strategy Im-
21 plementation Plan entitled “Wildfire Crisis
22 Implementation Plan” and dated January
23 2022 (and successor documents); and

24 (iv) the Wildfire Crisis Landscape In-
25 vestments plan entitled “Confronting the

1 Wildfire Crisis: Initial Landscape Invest-
2 ments to Protect Communities and Im-
3 prove Resilience in America's Forests''
4 dated April 2022 (and successor docu-
5 ments); and

6 (G) such other wildfire-related activities as
7 determined appropriate by the Secretary of Ag-
8 riculture or the Secretary of the Interior, in ac-
9 cordance with existing law and regulations; and
10 (2) in accordance with section 12203,
11 prioritizes carrying out landscape-scale restoration
12 projects.

13 (b) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsection (a),
14 to the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary of Agri-
15 culture, in coordination with the Secretary of Interior,
16 shall—

17 (1) utilize cooperative forestry authorities and
18 agreements, including but not limited to the Cooper-
19 ative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C.
20 2101 et seq.);

21 (2) solicit proposals from States, counties, and
22 Tribes to address water quantity and quality con-
23 cerns;

24 (3) solicit proposals from States, counties, and
25 Tribes for hazardous fuels treatments;

- 1 (4) consider the long-term State-wide assess-
2 ments and forest resource strategies established in
3 section 2A of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance
4 Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101a); and
- 5 (5) provide priority to collaboratively developed
6 projects.

7 **SEC. 12203. SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND-**
8 **SCAPE-SCALE FOREST RESTORATION**
9 **PROJECTS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Plan, the Sec-
11 retary of Agriculture shall select, in accordance with this
12 section, landscape scale forest restoration projects—

13 (1) to implement on National Forest System
14 land; and

15 (2) if applicable, to implement on land adjoin-
16 ing National Forest System land, in coordination
17 with other Federal and non-Federal entities.

18 (b) INITIAL PHASE.—During the 5-year period begin-
19 ning on the date of enactment of this Act, subject to the
20 availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Agriculture
21 shall select not more than 20 landscape-scale forest res-
22 toration projects under subsection (a).

23 (c) ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), to
25 be eligible for selection and implementation under

1 subsection (a), a landscape-scale forest restoration
2 project shall satisfy the following requirements:

3 (A) The purposes and needs for the project
4 shall be—

5 (i) to restore the ecological integrity
6 and ecological resilience of terrestrial and
7 aquatic areas that have departed from ref-
8 erence conditions within the forest land-
9 scape;

10 (ii) to restore appropriate natural fire
11 regimes, including by reducing fuel loads
12 in areas that have departed from reference
13 conditions, taking into account the current
14 and projected impacts of climate change;
15 and

16 (iii) to conduct wildfire risk reduction
17 activities within the wildland-urban inter-
18 face to the extent that the project includes
19 lands within the wildland-urban interface.

20 (B) The project shall be developed and
21 supported by a collaborative group that—

22 (i) includes multiple interested per-
23 sons representing diverse interests;

24 (ii) is transparent and inclusive; and

1 (iii) has sufficient expertise, capacity,
2 and scientific support to effectively plan,
3 implement, and monitor landscape-level,
4 ecologically based forest restoration activi-
5 ties.

6 (C) The project shall be based on a land-
7 scape assessment that shall—

8 (i) cover a landscape of—

9 (I) except as provided in sub-
10 clauses (II) and (III), not less than
11 100,000 acres;

12 (II) in such limited cases as the
13 Secretary of Agriculture determines to
14 be appropriate, not less than 80,000
15 acres if—

16 (aa) the assessment is com-
17 pleted or substantially completed
18 as of the date of enactment of
19 this Act; and

20 (bb) in the determination of
21 the Secretary of Agriculture, as-
22 sessing a larger area is not nec-
23 essary to restore the integrity, re-
24 siliance, and fire regimes of the
25 landscape; or

- 1 (III) not less than 50,000 acres
2 in the case of a project that is carried
3 out east of the 100th meridian;
- 4 (ii) evaluate ecological integrity and
5 determine reference conditions for the
6 landscape;
- 7 (iii) identify terrestrial and aquatic
8 areas within the landscape that have de-
9 parted from reference conditions;
- 10 (iv) identify criteria to determine ap-
11 propriate restoration treatments within de-
12 graded areas of the landscape to achieve
13 reference conditions, including manage-
14 ment prescriptions and necessary mitiga-
15 tion measures to protect at-risk species;
- 16 (v) be based on the best available sci-
17 entific information and data, including,
18 where applicable, high-resolution imagery,
19 LiDAR, and similar technologies and infor-
20 mation, and involve direct engagement by
21 scientists; and
- 22 (vi) identify priority restoration strat-
23 egies for terrestrial and aquatic areas, in-
24 cluding prescribed fire and wildfires man-

1 aged for multiple resource benefits, which
2 shall focus on—

3 (I) areas that are the most de-
4 parted from reference conditions; and

5 (II) areas that would benefit the
6 most from reducing the risk of
7 uncharacteristic wildfire, especially
8 with respect to nearby communities,
9 taking into account other completed,
10 ongoing, planned fuels-reduction
11 projects, and the effects of recent
12 wildfires.

13 (D) Restoration treatments under the
14 project—

15 (i) shall emphasize the reintroduction
16 of characteristic fire, based on forest ecol-
17 ogy and reference conditions, through the
18 use of prescribed fire, wildfire, or both;

19 (ii) that involve any proposed mechan-
20 ical treatments shall be designed to pro-
21 mote—

22 (I) the restoration of reference
23 conditions in areas that lack ecological
24 integrity, with a focus on the reduc-
25 tion of surface and ladder fuels; and

1 (II) the establishment of condi-
2 tions that will facilitate prescribed fire
3 or managed wildfire;

4 (iii) shall—

5 (I) fully maintain or contribute
6 to the restoration of reference old for-
7 est conditions, taking into account the
8 current and projected impacts of cli-
9 mate change; and

10 (II) protect or increase the num-
11 ber and distribution of large old trees,
12 consistent with reference conditions,
13 excepting any de minimis losses of
14 large old trees from prescribed fire or
15 hazardous tree removal; and

16 (iv) that involve prescribed fire shall
17 provide advance notification, in accordance
18 with notification procedures developed by
19 the Secretary of Agriculture, to the owner
20 or operator of critical infrastructure, such
21 as a power line right-of-way, of any pre-
22 scribed fire treatments within close prox-
23 imity to the infrastructure.

24 (E) The project shall be consistent with all
25 applicable environmental laws, including—

- 1 (i) the National Environmental Policy
2 Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);
3 (ii) the Endangered Species Act of
4 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and
5 (iii) the Forest and Rangeland Renew-
6 able Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
7 U.S.C. 1600 et seq.).

8 (F) The project shall not be carried out in
9 an inventoried roadless area or comparable
10 roadless area defined by a State-specific rule.

11 (G) The project shall require multiparty
12 monitoring, including opportunities for public
13 engagement, and an adaptive management ap-
14 proach that—

15 (i) conditions the future implementa-
16 tion of the project on the satisfactory com-
17 pletion of—

18 (I) priority restoration actions;

19 and

20 (II) required monitoring after im-
21 plementation;

22 (ii) validates conditions projected to
23 occur in the environmental analysis for the
24 project; and

1 (iii) requires modifications to the
2 project if monitoring reveals impacts be-
3 yond the anticipated impacts of the
4 project.

5 (H)(i) No new permanent road may be
6 built as part of the project.

7 (ii) Any new temporary roads needed to
8 implement the project shall be decommissioned
9 not later than 3 years after completion of the
10 project. The project shall use an efficient ap-
11 proach to landscape-scale analysis and decision-
12 making that is consistent with the National En-
13 vironmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
14 4321 et seq.), which may include—

15 (I) the preparation of a single envi-
16 ronmental impact statement or environ-
17 mental assessment, as applicable, for the
18 entire project, incorporating the landscape
19 assessment described in subparagraph (C);

20 (II) the use of, as applicable—

21 (aa) multiple records of decision
22 to implement a single environmental
23 impact statement; or

1 (bb) multiple decision notices to
2 implement a single environmental as-
3 sessment;

4 (III) the preparation of a pro-
5 grammatic environmental impact state-
6 ment or environmental assessment, as ap-
7 plicable, for the entire project, incor-
8 porating the landscape assessment de-
9 scribed in subparagraph (C), followed by
10 focused, concise, and site-specific—

11 (aa) environmental assessments;

12 or

13 (bb) categorical exclusions con-
14 sistent with the National Environ-
15 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
16 4321 et seq.); or

17 (IV) the use of the landscape assess-
18 ment described in subparagraph (C),
19 through incorporation by reference and
20 similar approaches, to support focused,
21 concise, and site-specific—

22 (aa) environmental assessments;

23 or

24 (bb) categorical exclusions con-
25 sistent with the National Environ-

1 mental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C.
2 4321 et seq.).

3 (2) EXCEPTION.—If the Secretary of Agri-
4 culture determines that there are an insufficient
5 number of projects that fully comply with the re-
6 quirements described in paragraph (1) to implement
7 based on all available funding, then the Secretary of
8 Agriculture may, during the 2-year period beginning
9 on the date of enactment of this Act, select under
10 subsection (a) not more than a total of 5 landscape-
11 scale forest restoration projects to implement that
12 do not fully comply with those requirements if the
13 projects—

14 (A) fully comply with the requirements de-
15 scribed in subparagraphs (B), (D), (E), (F),
16 (G), (H), and (I) of that paragraph;

17 (B) in the determination of the Secretary
18 of Agriculture, have purposes and needs that
19 are consistent with the purposes and needs de-
20 scribed in subparagraph (A) of that paragraph;
21 and

22 (C) are supported by landscape assess-
23 ments that are substantially (if not completely)
24 consistent with the requirements described in
25 subparagraph (C) of that paragraph, subject to

1 the condition that the applicable landscape as-
2 sessments fully comply with the requirements
3 described in clauses (i) and (v) of that subpara-
4 graph.

5 (d) EVALUATION OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—

6 (1) IN GENERAL.—In determining which land-
7 scape-scale forest restoration projects to select under
8 subsection (a), the Secretary of Agriculture shall
9 consider—

10 (A) the criteria described in paragraph (2);

11 (B) the extent to which the project utilizes
12 the approaches to project implementation de-
13 scribed in paragraph (3); and

14 (C) the recommendations of the advisory
15 panel established under subsection (e).

16 (2) CRITERIA.—The criteria referred to in
17 paragraph (1)(A) are—

18 (A) the demonstrated need, based on the
19 best available science, to restore ecological in-
20 tegrity to degraded or departed areas within the
21 landscape covered by the project, taking into
22 account the current and projected impacts of
23 climate change;

1 (B)(i) the importance of watersheds in the
2 area covered by the project for downstream
3 waters supply; and

4 (ii) the opportunity to improve the ecologi-
5 cal integrity and ecological conditions of those
6 watersheds and reduce risks to water resources
7 through landscape-scale forest restoration;

8 (C)(i) the potential extent of cost sharing
9 for the development and implementation of the
10 project from diverse sources, such as State or
11 local governments, water or electric utilities,
12 carbon credits, or private entities; and

13 (ii) the proportion of the non-Federal cost
14 share that is in the form of cash contributions;

15 (D) whether the area covered by the
16 project has high-resolution, remote-sensing data
17 and other information available that enables a
18 landscape assessment and a robust analysis and
19 disclosure of the effects and outcomes of imple-
20 menting restoration activities;

21 (E) whether the project is using, or will
22 use, innovative approaches to completing re-
23 source surveys that are less costly and less
24 time-consuming than usual practices while pro-

1 viding the information necessary for project de-
2 sign and analysis;

3 (F) whether the project will reduce the
4 number of miles of permanent roads on Na-
5 tional Forest System land that are not nec-
6 essary for resource management or recreational
7 access;

8 (G) whether the project will assess or
9 quantify the ecosystem service benefits of forest
10 restoration within the landscape covered by the
11 project, such as water, carbon, biodiversity, fire
12 risk reduction, public health, and community
13 safety;

14 (H) whether the project has the potential
15 to support new or existing wood processing in-
16 frastructure that can make economic use of the
17 byproducts of forest restoration;

18 (I) whether the project has the potential to
19 support local employment and investment op-
20 portunities, particularly in economically dis-
21 advantaged communities;

22 (J) the scale of the landscape assessment
23 for the project, with a preference for projects
24 for which the landscape assessment covers a
25 larger area; and

1 (K) whether the project—

2 (i) strives to restore ecological integ-
3 rity and ecological conditions within areas
4 across land ownerships, including State
5 and private land; and

6 (ii) will reduce the risk of
7 uncharacteristic wildfire, and, to the extent
8 practicable, restore ecological integrity,
9 within the wildland-urban interface.

10 (3) COLLABORATION.—The Secretary of Agri-
11 culture may coordinate with Federal, State, local,
12 and Tribal agencies with respect to selection and im-
13 plementation under subsection (a), a landscape-scale
14 forest restoration project.

15 (e) ADVISORY PANEL.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Agriculture
17 shall establish and maintain an advisory panel com-
18 posed of not more than 15 members to evaluate, and
19 provide recommendations on—

20 (A) each landscape-scale forest restoration
21 project that the Secretary of Agriculture is re-
22 viewing for potential selection under subsection
23 (a); and

24 (B) proposals for planning and developing
25 landscape-scale forest restoration projects.

1 (2) REPRESENTATION.—The Secretary of Agri-
2 culture shall ensure that the membership of the ad-
3 visory panel established under paragraph (1) is fair-
4 ly balanced in terms of the points of view rep-
5 resented and the functions to be performed by the
6 advisory panel.

7 (3) INCLUSION.—The advisory panel estab-
8 lished under paragraph (1) shall include experts in
9 ecological forest restoration, fire ecology, fire man-
10 agement, rural economic and workforce development,
11 strategies for ecological adaptation to climate
12 change, fish and wildlife ecology, and woody biomass
13 and small-diameter tree utilization.

14 **SEC. 12204. YOUTH AND CONSERVATION CORPS ASSIST-**
15 **ANCE WITH PROJECTS UNDER THE PLAN.**

16 In carrying out projects under the Plan, the Secre-
17 taries shall, to the maximum extent practicable—

18 (1) identify appropriate projects to be carried
19 out by, and enter into cooperative agreements to
20 carry out such projects with—

21 (A) qualified youth or conservation corps
22 (as defined in section 203 of the Public Lands
23 Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1722)); or

24 (B) nonprofit wilderness and trails stew-
25 ardship organizations, including—

- 1 (i) the Corps Network;
2 (ii) the National Wilderness Steward-
3 ship Alliance;
4 (iii) American Trails; and
5 (iv) other public lands stewardship or-
6 ganizations, as appropriate; and
7 (2) waive any matching funds requirements, in-
8 cluding under section 212(a)(1) of the Public Lands
9 Corps Act of 1993 (16 U.S.C. 1729(a)(1)).

10 **SEC. 12205. ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION GRANT FUND**
11 **THROUGH NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE**
12 **FOUNDATION.**

13 (a) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

14 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
15 ty” means a Federal agency, State, the District of
16 Columbia, a territory of the United States, a unit of
17 local government, an Indian Tribe, a non-profit or-
18 ganization, or an accredited institution of higher
19 education.

20 (2) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES.—The
21 term “eligible projects and activities” means projects
22 and activities carried out by an eligible entity on
23 public lands, Tribal lands, or private land, or any
24 combination thereof, to further the purposes for
25 which the Fund is established, including planning

1 and capacity building and projects and activities car-
2 ried out in coordination with Federal, State, or Trib-
3 al departments or agencies, or any department or
4 agency of a subdivision of a State.

5 (3) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation”
6 means the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
7 established under the National Fish and Wildlife
8 Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et
9 seq.).

10 (4) FUND.—The term “Fund” means the Com-
11 munity Resilience and Restoration Fund established
12 under subsection (b).

13 (5) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
14 means the governing body of any Indian or Alaska
15 Native Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, village, commu-
16 nity, component band, or component reservation in-
17 dividually identified (including parenthetically) on
18 the list published by the Secretary under section 104
19 of the Federally Recognized Indian Tribe List Act of
20 1994 (25 U.S.C. 5131).

21 (6) RESTORATION AND RESILIENCE LANDS.—
22 The term “restoration and resilience lands” means
23 fish, wildlife, and plant habitats, and other impor-
24 tant natural areas in the United States, on public
25 lands, private land (after obtaining proper consent

1 from the landowner), or land of Indian Tribes, in-
2 cluding grasslands, shrublands, prairies, chapparral
3 lands, forest lands, deserts, and riparian or wetland
4 areas within or adjacent to these ecosystems.

5 (7) PUBLIC LANDS.—The term “public lands”
6 means lands owned or controlled by the United
7 States.

8 (8) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
9 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
10 rector of the United States Fish and Wildlife Serv-
11 ice.

12 (9) STATE.—The term “State” means a State
13 of the United States, the District of Columbia, any
14 Indian Tribe, and any commonwealth, territory, or
15 possession of the United States.

16 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after
17 the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall
18 enter into a cooperative agreement with the Foundation
19 to establish the Community Resilience and Restoration
20 Fund at the Foundation to—

21 (1) improve community safety in the face of cli-
22 matic extremes through conservation and protection
23 of restoration and resilience lands;

24 (2) to protect, conserve, and restore restoration
25 and resilience lands in order to help communities re-

1 spond and adapt to natural threats, including wild-
2 fire, drought, extreme heat, and other threats posed
3 or exacerbated by the impacts of global climate;

4 (3) to build the resilience of restoration and re-
5 silience lands to adapt to, recover from, and with-
6 stand natural threats, including wildfire, drought,
7 extreme heat, and other threats posed or exacer-
8 bated by the impacts of global climate change;

9 (4) to protect and enhance the biodiversity of
10 wildlife populations, with special consideration to the
11 recovery and conservation of at-risk species, across
12 restoration and resilience lands;

13 (5) to support the health of restoration and re-
14 silience lands for the benefit of present and future
15 generations;

16 (6) to foster innovative, nature-based solutions
17 that help meet the goals of this section; and

18 (7) to enhance the nation's natural carbon se-
19 questration capabilities and help communities
20 strengthen natural carbon sequestration capacity
21 where applicable.

22 (c) MANAGEMENT OF THE FUND.—The Foundation
23 shall manage the Fund—

1 (1) pursuant to the National Fish and Wildlife
2 Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et
3 seq.); and

4 (2) in such a manner that, to the greatest ex-
5 tent practicable and consistent with the purposes for
6 which the Fund is established—

7 (A) ensures that amounts made available
8 through the Fund are accessible to historically
9 underserved communities, including Tribal com-
10 munities, communities of color, and rural com-
11 munities; and

12 (B) avoids project selection and funding
13 overlap with those projects and activities that
14 could otherwise receive funding under—

15 (i) the National Oceans and Coastal
16 Security Fund, established under the Na-
17 tional Oceans and Coastal Security Act (16
18 U.S.C. 7501 et seq.); or

19 (ii) other coastal management focused
20 programs.

21 (d) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—

22 (1) IN GENERAL.—To the extent amounts are
23 available in the Fund, the Foundation shall award
24 grants to eligible entities through a competitive
25 grant process in accordance with procedures estab-

1 lished pursuant to the National Fish and Wildlife
2 Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et
3 seq.) to carry out eligible projects and activities, in-
4 cluding planning eligible projects and activities.

5 (2) PROPOSALS.—The Foundation, in coordina-
6 tion with the Secretary, shall establish requirements
7 for proposals for competitive grants under this sec-
8 tion.

9 (e) USE OF AMOUNTS IN THE FUND.—

10 (1) PLANNING.—Not less than 8 percent of
11 amounts appropriated annually to the Fund may be
12 used to plan eligible projects and activities, including
13 capacity building.

14 (2) ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.—

15 (A) FOUNDATION.—Not more than 4 per-
16 cent of amounts appropriated annually to the
17 Fund may be used by the Foundation for ad-
18 ministrative expenses of the Fund or adminis-
19 tration of competitive grants offered under the
20 Fund.

21 (B) USFWS.—Not more than 4 percent of
22 the amounts appropriated annually to the Fund
23 may be used by the United States Fish and
24 Wildlife Service for administrative expenses.

1 (3) PRIORITY.—Not less than \$10,000,000 of
2 the amounts appropriated annually to the Fund
3 shall be awarded annually to support eligible
4 projects and activities for Indian Tribes.

5 (4) COORDINATION.—The Secretary and Foun-
6 dation shall ensure, to the greatest extent prac-
7 ticable and through meaningful consultation, that
8 input from Indian Tribes, including traditional eco-
9 logical knowledge, is incorporated in the planning
10 and execution of eligible projects and activities.

11 (f) REPORTS.—

12 (1) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Beginning at the end
13 the first full fiscal year after the date of enactment
14 of this section, and not later than 60 days after the
15 end of each fiscal year in which amounts are depos-
16 ited into the Fund, the Foundation shall submit to
17 the Secretary a report on the operation of the Fund
18 including—

19 (A) an accounting of expenditures made
20 under the Fund, including leverage and match
21 as applicable;

22 (B) an accounting of any grants made
23 under the Fund, including a list of recipients
24 and a brief description of each project and its
25 purposes and goals; and

1 (C) measures and metrics to track benefits
2 created by grants administered under the Fund,
3 including enhanced biodiversity, water quality,
4 natural carbon sequestration, and resilience.

5 (2) 5-YEAR REPORTS.—Not later than 90 days
6 after the end of the fifth full fiscal year after the
7 date of enactment of this section, and not later than
8 90 days after the end every fifth fiscal year there-
9 after, the Foundation shall submit to the Secretary
10 a report containing—

11 (A) a description of any socioeconomic,
12 biodiversity, community resilience, or climate
13 resilience or mitigation (including natural car-
14 bon sequestration), impacts generated by
15 projects funded by grants awarded by the
16 Fund, including measures and metrics illus-
17 trating these impacts;

18 (B) a description of land health benefits
19 derived from projects funded by grants awarded
20 by the Fund, including an accounting of—

21 (i) lands treated for invasive species;
22 (ii) lands treated for wildfire threat
23 reduction, including those treated with
24 controlled burning or other natural fire-
25 management techniques; and

1 (iii) lands restored either from wildfire
2 or other forms of degradation, including
3 over- grazing and sedimentation;

4 (C) key findings for Congress, including
5 any recommended changes to the authorization
6 or purposes of the Fund;

7 (D) best practices for other Federal agen-
8 cies in the administration of funds intended for
9 land and habitat restoration;

10 (E) information on the use and outcome of
11 funds specifically set aside for planning and ca-
12 pacity building pursuant to subsection (e)(1);
13 and

14 (F) any other information that the Foun-
15 dation considers relevant.

16 (3) SUBMISSION OF REPORTS TO CONGRESS.—

17 Not later than 10 days after receiving a report
18 under this section, the Secretary shall submit the re-
19 port to the Committee on Natural Resources of the
20 House of Representatives and the Committee on En-
21 vironment and Public Works of the Senate.

22 (g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
23 hereby authorized to be appropriated to the Fund
24 \$100,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2036
25 to carry out this section.

1 **SEC. 12206. REPORT ON 10-YEAR NATIONAL WILDFIRE PLAN**
2 **IMPLEMENTATION.**

3 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment
4 of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Inspector General
5 of the Department of Agriculture shall submit to Congress
6 a report on the progress made in the prior year towards
7 completing the goals established under the Plan that in-
8 cludes—

9 (1) the amount of funding appropriated to
10 carry out the Plan pursuant to the provisions of this
11 subtitle with respect to the prior fiscal year; and

12 (2) recommendations to improve implementa-
13 tion of the Plan.

14 **DIVISION B—FIRE-ADAPTED**
15 **COMMUNITIES**
16 **TITLE I—COMMUNITY PROTEC-**
17 **TION AND HOME HARDENING**
18 **Subtitle A—Grant Programs for**
19 **Wildfire Resilience**

20 **SEC. 21101. UPDATING LIST OF AT-RISK COMMUNITIES.**

21 (a) AMENDMENT TO HFRA DEFINITION OF AT-RISK
22 COMMUNITY.—Subparagraph (A) of section 101(1) of the
23 Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C.
24 6511(1)(A)) is amended to read as follows:

25 “(A) that is comprised of a group of homes
26 and other structures with basic infrastructure

1 and services (such as utilities and collectively
2 maintained transportation routes) within or ad-
3 jacent to Federal land;”.

4 (b) MAP OF AT-RISK COMMUNITIES.—Not later than
5 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, and
6 every 5 years thereafter, the Administrator of the Federal
7 Emergency Management Agency, acting through the
8 United States Fire Administrator and in coordination with
9 the Chief of the Forest Service, shall develop and publish
10 a map depicting at-risk communities (as defined in section
11 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16
12 U.S.C. 6511), as amended by this section), including Trib-
13 al at-risk communities.

14 **SEC. 21102. AMENDMENT TO COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DE-**
15 **FENSE GRANT PROGRAM TO ALLOW STRUC-**
16 **TURE HARDENING.**

17 Section 40803(f) of the Infrastructure Investment
18 and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592(f)) is amended—

19 (1) in paragraph (1)—

20 (A) by striking “(c)(12)” and inserting
21 “(c)(12) and section 21103 of the Wildfire Re-
22 sponse and Readiness Act”; and

23 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking
24 “projects” and inserting “projects (including
25 covered projects)”; and

1 (2) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the
2 following new subparagraph:

3 “(D) COVERED PROJECTS DEFINED.—In
4 this subsection, the term ‘covered projects’
5 means the following:

6 “(i) The construction, modification, or
7 maintenance of a structure to make the
8 structure resistant to the intrusion of
9 flames or embers.

10 “(ii) The modification of a structure
11 or an area adjacent to a structure, (includ-
12 ing vegetation and miscellaneous struc-
13 tures, such as garages, sheds, and fencing)
14 if such modification is carried out—

15 “(I) to reduce the exposure of the
16 structure to direct contact from flame,
17 radiation, or embers from wildfire;
18 and

19 “(II) with consideration for the
20 potential effects on the structure of
21 nearby combustible features (including
22 vegetation, vehicles, and miscellaneous
23 structures, such as garages, sheds,
24 and fencing).”.

1 **SEC. 21103. ADDITIONAL AMOUNTS FOR COMMUNITY WILD-**
2 **FIRE DEFENSE GRANT PROGRAM.**

3 In addition to amounts made available to the Sec-
4 retary of Agriculture under section 40803(c)(12) of the
5 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C.
6 6592(c)(12)), there is authorized to be appropriated to the
7 Secretary of Agriculture to carry out section 40803(f) of
8 the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C.
9 6592(f)) \$1,000,000,000 for each fiscal year.

10 **SEC. 21104. IMPROVEMENTS TO GRANT PROGRAMS FOR**
11 **COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION**
12 **AND POSTFIRE RECOVERY EFFORTS.**

13 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
14 date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall,
15 with respect to the grant programs for community wildfire
16 risk reduction and postfire recovery efforts carried out by
17 each of the Secretaries—

18 (1) increase the accessibility of such grant pro-
19 grams;

20 (2) reduce the complexity of the application
21 process for grants under such programs, including—

22 (A) by reducing the amount of information
23 required to apply; and

24 (B) to the maximum extent practicable, en-
25 abling auto-populating fields in the online appli-
26 cations for such grants;

1 (3) reduce administrative burden with respect
2 to such grant programs, including by—

3 (A) aligning program applications to re-
4 duce separate applications for similar programs;
5 and

6 (B) developing a common section for appli-
7 cations to reduce duplicative questions;

8 (4) review the statutory and administrative bar-
9 riers that impede the ability of communities to
10 quickly access funds under each such grant pro-
11 gram;

12 (5) increase technical assistance provided to ap-
13 plicants, recipients, and subrecipients; and

14 (6) increase outreach to potential applicants for
15 such grant programs, including by—

16 (A) providing appropriate dedicated staff
17 to assist individuals and communities in identi-
18 fying and applying for grants under such grant
19 programs; and

20 (B) notifying potential applicants of eligi-
21 bility and open application seasons with respect
22 to such grant programs.

23 (b) SECRETARIES DEFINED.—In this section, the
24 term “Secretaries” means—

25 (1) the Secretary of the Interior;

1 (2) the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through
2 the Chief of the Forest Service;

3 (3) the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
4 gency Management Agency;

5 (4) the Administrator of the Small Business
6 Administration; and

7 (5) the Administrator of the Environmental
8 Protection Agency.

9 **SEC. 21105. IMPROVEMENTS TO FEMA PROGRAMS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 324 of the Robert T.
11 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
12 (42 U.S.C. 5165b) is amended—

13 (1) in subsection (b)(2)—

14 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (A)
15 and (B) as clauses (i) and (ii), respectively, and
16 adjusting the margins accordingly; and

17 (B) in the matter preceding clause (i), as
18 so redesignated, by striking “provide the fol-
19 lowing percentage rates, in addition to the eligi-
20 ble project costs, to cover direct and indirect
21 costs of administering the following programs:”
22 and inserting “provide—

23 “(A) excess funds for management costs as
24 described in subsection (c); and

1 “(B) the following percentage rates in ad-
2 dition to the eligible costs, to cover direct and
3 indirect costs of administering the following
4 programs;”;

5 (2) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-
6 section (d); and

7 (3) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
8 lowing:

9 “(c) USE OF EXCESS FUNDS FOR MANAGEMENT
10 COSTS.—

11 “(1) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term
12 ‘excess funds for management costs’ means the dif-
13 ference between—

14 “(A) the amount of the applicable specific
15 management costs authorized under subsection
16 (b)(1) and subsection (b)(2)(B); and

17 “(B) as of the date on which the grant
18 award is closed, the amount of funding for
19 management costs activities expended by the
20 grantee or subgrantee receiving the financial as-
21 sistance for costs described in subparagraph
22 (A).

23 “(2) AVAILABILITY OF EXCESS FUNDS FOR
24 MANAGEMENT COSTS.—The President may make
25 available to a grantee or subgrantee receiving finan-

1 cial assistance under section 403, 404, 406, 407, or
2 502 any excess funds for management costs.

3 “(3) USE OF FUNDS.—Excess funds for man-
4 agement costs made available to a grantee or sub-
5 grantee under paragraph (2) may be used for—

6 “(A) activities associated with building ca-
7 pacity to prepare for, recover from, or mitigate
8 the impacts of a major disaster or emergency
9 declared under section 401 or 501, respectively;
10 and

11 “(B) management costs associated with
12 any—

13 “(i) major disaster;

14 “(ii) emergency;

15 “(iii) disaster preparedness measure;

16 or

17 “(iv) mitigation activity or measure
18 authorized under section 203, 204, 205, or
19 404.

20 “(4) AVAILABILITY.—Excess funds for manage-
21 ment costs made available to a grantee or sub-
22 grantee under paragraph (2) shall remain available
23 to the grantee or subgrantee until the date that is
24 5 years after the date on which the excess funds for

1 management costs are made available under para-
2 graph (2).”.

3 (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendments made by sub-
4 section (a) shall apply with respect to any grant award
5 in relation to a major disaster or emergency declared
6 under section 401 or 501, respectively, of the Robert T.
7 Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
8 (42 U.S.C. 5170, 5191)—

9 (1) the declaration of which is made on or after
10 the date of enactment of this Act; and

11 (2) that is funded with amounts appropriated
12 on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

13 (c) GAO STUDY.—Not later than 180 days after the
14 date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General
15 of the United States shall submit to the Committee on
16 Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
17 ate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastruc-
18 ture of the House of Representatives a report—

19 (1) on the actual management costs described
20 in section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
21 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
22 5165b) during the period of a major disaster dec-
23 laration under section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C.
24 5170) to determine whether the amount set aside for

1 those management costs after the date of enactment
2 of this Act is appropriate; and

3 (2) that includes the management costs de-
4 scribed in section 324 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
5 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42
6 U.S.C. 5165b) for each major disaster declared
7 under section 401 of such Act (42 U.S.C. 5170)
8 during the 5-year period preceding the date of the
9 report, the amount set aside for those management
10 costs, the use of those management costs, the length
11 of each disaster, and the reason for the length of
12 each disaster.

13 (d) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS.—No additional funds
14 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out the amend-
15 ments made by subsection (a).

16 (e) FIRE MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM POL-
17 ICY.—Section 420(a) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
18 Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5187(a))
19 is amended—

20 (1) by striking the period at the end and insert-
21 ing “; and”;

22 (2) by striking “local government for the miti-
23 gation” and inserting the following: “local govern-
24 ment for—

25 “(1) the mitigation”; and

1 (3) by adding at the end the following:

2 “(2) assessments and emergency stabilization to
3 protect public safety irrespective of the incident pe-
4 riod for a declared fire.”.

5 (f) CHANGES TO PUBLIC ASSISTANCE POLICY
6 GUIDE.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enact-
7 ment of this Act, the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
8 gency Management Agency shall amend the Public Assist-
9 ance Program and Policy Guide of the Federal Emergency
10 Management Agency to include guidance on wildfire-spe-
11 cific recovery challenges, including debris removal, emer-
12 gency protective measures, and the resulting toxicity of
13 drinking water resources.

14 (g) MITIGATION COST EFFECTIVENESS.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
16 Federal Emergency Management Agency shall con-
17 duct a review of the criteria for evaluating the cost
18 effectiveness of projects intended to mitigate the im-
19 pacts of wildfire under sections 203 and 404 of the
20 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency
21 Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5133; 5170c), includ-
22 ing—

23 (A) the establishment of precalculated ben-
24 efits criterion for common defensible space miti-
25 gation projects for wildfire mitigation;

1 (B) the use of nature-based infrastructure
2 in wildfire mitigation;

3 (C) considerations for vegetation manage-
4 ment for wildfire mitigation;

5 (D) reducing the negative effects of wild-
6 fire smoke on public health; and

7 (E) lessening the impact of wildfires on
8 water infrastructure.

9 (2) UPDATED CRITERIA.—Not later than 1 year
10 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
11 trator of the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
12 cy shall issue such guidance as is necessary to—

13 (A) update criteria for evaluating the cost
14 effectiveness of mitigation projects under sec-
15 tions 203 and 404 of the Robert T. Stafford
16 Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act
17 (42 U.S.C. 5133; 5170c) based on the results
18 of the review conducted under paragraph (1);
19 and

20 (B) prioritize such projects based on the
21 criteria updated under subparagraph (A).

22 **SEC. 21106. INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD DISASTER MITIGA-**
23 **TION PROGRAM.**

24 (a) ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM.—Title II of the
25 Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assist-

1 ance Act (42 U.S.C. 5131 et seq.) is amended by adding
2 at the end the following:

3 **“SEC. 207. INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD DISASTER MITIGATION**
4 **PROGRAM.**

5 “(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The President shall estab-
6 lish a program to provide grants to States and Indian
7 Tribal governments for qualifying pre-disaster mitigation
8 activities on individual residential households that are at
9 risk of being damaged by a major disaster.

10 “(b) ESTABLISHMENT OF ELIGIBLE DISASTER
11 AREAS.—In carrying out the program under this section,
12 the President shall—

13 “(1) establish eligible disaster areas, in con-
14 sultation with States, that the President determines
15 to be at risk of a natural hazard, including—

16 “(A) a description of the type, likelihood,
17 and severity of each potential natural hazard
18 affecting each such risk area; and

19 “(B) by taking into account previously de-
20 clared major disasters impacting such areas;

21 “(2) provide technical assistance to the States
22 or Indian Tribal governments in developing the plan
23 described in subsection (c) and administering grants
24 provided for individual households under the pro-
25 gram;

1 “(3) not less frequently than every 5 years, re-
2 view and update the eligible disaster areas that the
3 President determines to be at risk of a natural dis-
4 aster, including a description of the type and sever-
5 ity of each potential natural disaster affecting each
6 such risk area; and

7 “(4) consult with relevant governmental and
8 nongovernmental experts in order to ensure that
9 such determinations are made using current sci-
10 entific standards and tools available in establishing,
11 reviewing, and updating the eligible disaster areas
12 that the President determines to be at risk of a nat-
13 ural disaster.

14 “(c) PLAN FOR ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—To be eligi-
15 ble for a grant under this section, a State or Indian Tribal
16 government shall submit to the President a plan that in-
17 cludes—

18 “(1) each disaster risk area established by the
19 President under subsection (b) in which the State or
20 Indian Tribal government proposes to provide funds
21 under the program;

22 “(2) an assessment of the availability and af-
23 fordability of homeowner insurance coverage in each
24 such risk area, including a breakdown of coverage
25 offered by—

1 “(A) private insurance companies;

2 “(B) State residual markets; and

3 “(C) State and Federal insurance pro-
4 grams;

5 “(3) an analysis of factors that may be ad-
6 versely impacting insurance availability and afford-
7 ability;

8 “(4) a list of each qualifying mitigation activity
9 that is eligible for funds in each such risk area;

10 “(5) the criteria by which a State or Indian
11 Tribal government will evaluate applicants, which
12 shall include consideration of the household income
13 of the applicant and whether the residence is located
14 in a Community Disaster Resilience Zone; and

15 “(6) a financial plan that includes maximum
16 amounts available to a household for each qualifying
17 mitigation activity.

18 “(d) CONSULTATION.—In establishing the program
19 under this section, the President, acting through the Ad-
20 ministrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agen-
21 cy and the Director of the Federal Insurance Office, shall
22 consult with the chief insurance regulators from the 50
23 States, the District of Columbia, and the territories of the
24 United States, insurance industry stakeholders, including
25 insurers, reinsurers, agents, brokers, and insurance-fund-

1 ed research organizations, and consumer and environ-
2 mental stakeholders to determine what qualifying mitiga-
3 tion activities are likely to incentivize the availability and
4 purchase of residential property insurance and other fi-
5 nancial risk transfer mechanisms in eligible disaster areas.

6 “(e) LIMITATIONS.—

7 “(1) HIGH-RISK AREAS.—Funds provided under
8 this section may only be used in eligible disaster
9 areas that the State or Indian Tribal government
10 determines are at a high risk of experiencing a
11 major disaster for the major disaster that presents
12 such a risk.

13 “(2) LIMITATION BASED ON ADJUSTED GROSS
14 INCOME.—An individual shall not be eligible to re-
15 ceive a grant under this section if the adjusted gross
16 income of such individual exceeds \$250,000
17 (\$500,000 in the case of a joint tax return) for the
18 taxable year ending in the calendar year immediately
19 preceding the calendar year with respect to which a
20 grant application is filed.

21 “(3) DEFINITION OF ADJUSTED GROSS IN-
22 COME.—In this section, the term ‘adjusted gross in-
23 come’ has the meaning given such term in section
24 62(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

25 “(f) MULTI-TIERED MITIGATION STANDARDS.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The President, acting
2 through the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
3 gency Management Agency, shall establish mitiga-
4 tion standards for individual households that carry
5 out each type of qualifying mitigation activity eligi-
6 ble for funds under the program, which may include
7 a multi-tiered standard.

8 “(2) CONSIDERATION.—In establishing the
9 mitigation standards under paragraph (1), the
10 President, acting through the Administrator—

11 “(A) shall consider any standards estab-
12 lished by—

13 “(i) the Insurance Institute for Busi-
14 ness and Home Safety;

15 “(ii) the chief insurance regulators
16 from the 50 States, the District of Colum-
17 bia, and the territories of the United
18 States; and

19 “(iii) any other standard-issuing enti-
20 ty determined appropriate; and

21 “(B) may—

22 “(i) adopt a standard considered
23 under subparagraph (A); or

24 “(ii) establish alternative standards.

1 “(g) GUIDANCE TO INSURANCE PROVIDERS.—To be
2 eligible for a grant under the program under this section,
3 a State or Indian Tribal government shall establish, and
4 make available to the public, guidance to insurance pro-
5 viders and consumers that includes suggested incentives
6 for households that carry out disaster mitigation activities
7 under the program, including—

8 “(1) the mitigation standards established under
9 subsection (f);

10 “(2) increased consumer coverage choice; and

11 “(3) actuarially supported favorable pricing
12 benefits such as discounts, rebates, or premium
13 credits.

14 “(h) MAXIMUM AMOUNTS.—A State or Indian Tribal
15 government may not provide more than an amount of
16 \$10,000, not to exceed the actual cost of mitigation activi-
17 ties, to any individual household under the program. Such
18 amount shall be increased yearly to reflect any increase
19 in the Consumer Price Index.

20 “(i) DEFINITION OF QUALIFYING MITIGATION AC-
21 TIVITY.—In this section, the term ‘qualifying mitigation
22 activity’ means an activity relating to a housing unit—

23 “(1) for property to—

24 “(A) improve the strength of a roof deck
25 attachment;

1 “(B) create a secondary water barrier to
2 prevent water intrusion or mitigate against po-
3 tential water intrusion from wind-driven rain;

4 “(C) improve the durability, impact resist-
5 ance (not less than class 3 or 4 rating), or fire
6 resistance (not less than class A rating) of a
7 roof covering;

8 “(D) brace gable-end walls;

9 “(E) reinforce the connection between a
10 roof and supporting wall;

11 “(F) protect openings from penetration by
12 wind-borne debris;

13 “(G) protect exterior doors and garages
14 from natural hazards;

15 “(H) complete measures contained in the
16 publication of the Federal Emergency Manage-
17 ment Agency entitled ‘Wind Retrofit Guide for
18 Residential Buildings’ (P-804);

19 “(I) elevate the qualified dwelling unit, as
20 well as utilities, machinery, or equipment, above
21 the base flood elevation or other applicable min-
22 imum elevation requirement;

23 “(J) seal walls in the basement of the
24 qualified dwelling unit using waterproofing com-
25 pounds; or

1 “(K) protect propane tanks or other exter-
2 nal fuel sources;

3 “(2) to install—

4 “(A) check valves to prevent flood water
5 from backing up into drains;

6 “(B) flood vents, breakaway walls or open
7 lattice for homes located in V zones;

8 “(C) a stormwater drainage system or im-
9 prove an existing system;

10 “(D) natural or nature-based features for
11 flood control, including living shorelines;

12 “(E) roof coverings, sheathing, flashing,
13 roof and attic vents, eaves, or gutters that con-
14 form to ignition-resistant construction stand-
15 ards;

16 “(F) wall components for wall assemblies
17 that conform to ignition-resistant construction
18 standards;

19 “(G) a wall-to-foundation anchor or con-
20 nector, or a shear transfer anchor or connector;

21 “(H) wood structural panel sheathing for
22 strengthening cripple walls;

23 “(I) anchorage of the masonry chimney to
24 the framing;

1 “(J) prefabricated lateral resisting sys-
2 tems;

3 “(K) a standby generator system con-
4 sisting of a standby generator and an automatic
5 transfer switch;

6 “(L) a storm shelter that meets the design
7 and construction standards established by the
8 International Code Council and the National
9 Storm Shelter Association (ICC-500), or a safe
10 room that satisfies the criteria contained in—

11 “(i) the publication of the Federal
12 Emergency Management Agency entitled
13 ‘Safe Rooms for Tornadoes and Hurri-
14 canes’ (P-361); or

15 “(ii) the publication of the Federal
16 Emergency Management Agency entitled
17 ‘Taking Shelter from the Storm’ (P-320);

18 “(M) a lightning protection system;

19 “(N) exterior walls, doors, windows, or
20 other exterior dwelling unit elements that con-
21 form to ignition-resistant construction stand-
22 ards;

23 “(O) exterior deck or fence components
24 that conform to ignition-resistant construction
25 standards;

1 “(P) structure-specific water hydration
2 systems, including fire mitigation systems such
3 as interior sprinkler systems;

4 “(Q) flood openings for fully enclosed
5 areas below the lowest floor of the dwelling
6 unit;

7 “(R) lateral bracing for wall elements,
8 foundation elements, and garage doors or other
9 large openings to resist seismic loads; or

10 “(S) automatic shutoff valves for water
11 and gas lines;

12 “(3) for services or equipment to—

13 “(A) create buffers around the qualified
14 dwelling unit through the removal or reduction
15 of flammable vegetation, including vertical
16 clearance of tree branches;

17 “(B) create buffers around the dwelling
18 unit through—

19 “(i) the removal of exterior deck or
20 fence components or ignition-prone land-
21 scape features; or

22 “(ii) replacement of the components
23 or features described in clause (i) with
24 components or features that conform to ig-
25 nition-resistant construction standards;

1 “(C) perform fire maintenance procedures
2 identified by the Federal Emergency Manage-
3 ment Agency or the United States Forest Serv-
4 ice, including fuel management techniques such
5 as creating fuel and fire breaks; or

6 “(D) replace flammable vegetation with
7 less flammable species;

8 “(4) for property relating to satisfying the
9 standards required for receipt of a FORTIFIED
10 designation from the Insurance Institute for Busi-
11 ness and Home Safety, provided that the qualified
12 dwelling unit receives such designation following in-
13 stallation of such property;

14 “(5) for property relating to satisfying the
15 standards required for receipt of a Wildfire Prepared
16 Homes designation from the Insurance Institute for
17 Business and Home Safety, provided that the quali-
18 fied dwelling unit receives such designation following
19 installation of such property; or

20 “(6) for any other hazard mitigation activity
21 identified by the President, in consultation with the
22 Administrator of the Federal Emergency Manage-
23 ment Agency and the hazard mitigation advisory
24 committee established in subsection (k), for mitiga-
25 tion of a natural hazard.

1 “(j) HAZARD MITIGATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE.—

2 The President shall establish a hazard mitigation advisory
3 committee that shall—

4 “(1) consist of 50 representatives, including
5 representatives from—

6 “(A) the State Insurance Commissioners;

7 “(B) private insurance companies;

8 “(C) private reinsurance companies;

9 “(D) insurance broker companies;

10 “(E) insurance-funded research organiza-
11 tions;

12 “(F) consumer advocate organizations;

13 “(G) State, local, and Tribal firefighting
14 agencies;

15 “(H) State-sponsored insurance plans;

16 “(I) realtor associations;

17 “(J) home builder associations;

18 “(K) State, local, and Tribal emergency re-
19 sponders;

20 “(L) State and Tribal emergency man-
21 agers;

22 “(M) State and Tribal hazard mitigation
23 officers;

24 “(N) relevant academic experts;

25 “(O) building code associations;

1 “(P) agricultural groups; and

2 “(Q) environmental organizations; and

3 “(2) advise the President on developments in
4 emerging hazard mitigation research and testing and
5 recommend additions to the qualified hazard mitiga-
6 tion activities eligible under this program, including
7 reviewing the effectiveness of hazard mitigation sys-
8 tems, products, and designations submitted to the
9 advisory committee by private or nongovernmental
10 companies or organizations.

11 “(k) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
12 Act shall—

13 “(1) require a State or any other entity to base
14 the assessment of the status of the availability of
15 homeowner insurance coverage required under sub-
16 section (c)(2) on data not already collected by that
17 entity absent this requirement; and

18 “(2) be construed to preempt the State regula-
19 tion of the business of insurance or require, by the
20 Federal Government or any State government, any
21 insurance provider to alter the underwriting, pricing,
22 and distribution of insurance.”.

23 (b) TAX TREATMENT OF INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD
24 DISASTER MITIGATION PROGRAM.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 139 of the Internal
2 Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by redesignating
3 subsection (h) as subsection (i) and by inserting
4 after subsection (g) the following new subsection:

5 “(h) INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLD DISASTER MITIGA-
6 TION PROGRAM.—Gross income shall not include amounts
7 received under section 207 of the Robert T. Stafford Dis-
8 aster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act.”.

9 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made
10 by this subsection shall apply to amounts received
11 after the date of the enactment of this Act.

12 **Subtitle B—Reports**

13 **SEC. 21201. COMMUNITY PROTECTION AND RESILIENCE RE-** 14 **PORT.**

15 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
16 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
17 shall publish a report—

18 (1) on authorities and programs of the Federal
19 Government that are available to protect commu-
20 nities from wildfires; and

21 (2) that includes an assessment of the Comp-
22 troller General with respect to impediments to the
23 implementation of such programs, including gaps in
24 funding.

1 **SEC. 21202. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RESILIENCE AND IN-**
2 **SURANCE COVERAGE STUDY.**

3 Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
4 of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States
5 shall publish a study that includes—

6 (1) an assessment of the Comptroller General
7 with respect to—

8 (A) the potential for a community protec-
9 tion and wildfire resilience plan to qualify for a
10 certification identifying a level of wildfire sur-
11 vivability and resilience; and

12 (B) methods that could be used by the
13 Federal Government to incentivize insurance
14 companies to accept such a certification; and

15 (2) an identification of any metrics that could
16 be provided to insurance companies as assurance
17 that a community has wildfire resilience measures in
18 place.

19 **SEC. 21203. SHRUBLAND WILDFIRE MITIGATION STUDY.**

20 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

21 (1) COVERED ECOSYSTEMS.—The term “cov-
22 ered ecosystems” means shrubland ecosystems, in-
23 cluding—

24 (A) chaparral;

25 (B) coastal sage scrub;

26 (C) sagebrush;

1 (D) shrub-steppe;

2 (E) xeric shrubland; and

3 (F) any other dryland shrub ecosystem in
4 which wildfire management presents a signifi-
5 cant challenge, as determined by the Secretary.

6 (2) HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT ACTIV-
7 ITY.—The term “hazardous fuels management activ-
8 ity” means an activity to manage vegetation to re-
9 duce the risk of wildfire.

10 (3) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
11 TEES.—The term “relevant Congressional commit-
12 tees” means—

13 (A) the committees on Appropriations,
14 Natural Resources, and Agriculture of the
15 House of Representatives; and

16 (B) the committees on Appropriations, En-
17 ergy and Mineral Resources, and Agriculture,
18 Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate.

19 (4) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
20 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
21 Chief of the Forest Service.

22 (5) WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.—The term
23 “wildland-urban interface” has the meaning given
24 such term in section 101 of the Healthy Forests
25 Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

1 (b) STUDY.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
3 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary
4 shall conduct a study to evaluate the effectiveness of
5 wildfire mitigation methods available to the Forest
6 Service as a means of reducing the risk of wildfire
7 in covered ecosystems and the severity of damages
8 from such wildfire in communities within or adjacent
9 to covered ecosystems.

10 (2) ELEMENTS.—In carrying out the study
11 under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall, with re-
12 spect to covered ecosystems—

13 (A) evaluate the effectiveness and longevity
14 of—

15 (i) hazardous fuels management ac-
16 tivities, including fuel modification through
17 the use of strategic fuel breaks; and

18 (ii) practices for maintaining the
19 health of native ecosystems, including—

20 (I) mitigating the development
21 and spread of invasive species, includ-
22 ing invasive weeds, grasses, and other
23 vegetation; or

1 (II) improving the resprouting of
2 native shrub species on lands affected
3 by wildfire;

4 (B) evaluate the effectiveness of policies
5 and protocols of the Forest Service with respect
6 to limiting unintentional ember ignitions attrib-
7 utable to the public or man-made structures, in-
8 cluding electrical infrastructure;

9 (C) study the conditions (including weath-
10 er, seasonality, and topography) under which
11 each wildfire mitigation method evaluated under
12 the study is most and least effective in reducing
13 the risk of wildland fire;

14 (D) identify administrative, operational,
15 and budgetary factors that impede the ability of
16 wildland fire managers and wildland firefighters
17 to implement wildfire mitigation methods evalu-
18 ated under the study; and

19 (E) evaluate the effectiveness of partner-
20 ships between the Forest Service and non-Fed-
21 eral entities in reducing the vulnerability of
22 homes, roadways, and other high-risk structures
23 to ember ignition.

24 (3) COORDINATION; CONSULTATION.—

1 (A) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—In
2 carrying out the study under paragraph (1), the
3 Secretary shall, to the extent practicable and to
4 avoid the duplication of research activities of
5 the Federal Government, act in coordination
6 with—

7 (i) entities within the Forest Service
8 with expertise in wildfire risk reduction
9 and ecology in covered ecosystems, includ-
10 ing the Shrub Sciences Laboratory and the
11 Maintaining Resilient Dryland Ecosystems
12 program; and

13 (ii) the heads of Federal agencies con-
14 ducting wildfire mitigation activities or
15 hazardous fuels management activities in
16 covered ecosystems, including the Sec-
17 retary of the Interior.

18 (B) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the
19 study under paragraph (1), the Secretary may,
20 and is encouraged to, solicit consultation from
21 non-Federal public and private entities with rel-
22 evant expertise in wildfire mitigation in covered
23 ecosystems, as determined by the Secretary.

24 (c) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date
25 on which the study under subsection (b)(1) is complete,

1 the Secretary shall submit to the relevant Congressional
2 committees, and make publicly available, a report that in-
3 cludes—

4 (1) a summary of the results of the study;

5 (2) based on the results of the study, identifica-
6 tion by the Secretary of—

7 (A) best practices for land managers in re-
8 ducing the risk of wildfire in covered eco-
9 systems; and

10 (B) any areas implicated by the study that
11 merit further research;

12 (3) a comparison of the policies and protocols of
13 the Forest Service with respect to reducing the risk
14 of wildfire in covered ecosystems and the best prac-
15 tices identified under paragraph (2)(A); and

16 (4) an evaluation by the Secretary of opportuni-
17 ties to improve coordination between the Forest
18 Service and non-Federal entities on activities to im-
19 prove wildfire resilience in covered ecosystems and
20 reduce risks of harm from wildfire to the built envi-
21 ronment, particularly in the wildland-urban inter-
22 face.

23 **SEC. 21204. EMERGENCY AUTHORITIES REPORT.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
25 date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,

1 the Chief of the Forest Service and the Director of the
2 Bureau of Land Management shall publish a joint report
3 on the use of emergency authorities. The report shall in-
4 clude—

5 (1) the number of times each authority has
6 been utilized;

7 (2) the number of acres affected by the use of
8 each authority;

9 (3) for each use of an emergency authority—

10 (A) the name of the State and manage-
11 ment unit in which the emergency authority
12 was used;

13 (B) the specific emergency authority used;
14 and

15 (C) the duration of any public comment
16 period on each use of a relevant emergency au-
17 thority; and

18 (4) in the case of subsection (b)(2), the date
19 that formal consultation was completed.

20 (b) EMERGENCY AUTHORITY DEFINED.—For the
21 purposes of this subsection “emergency authority” means:

22 (1) section 46.150 of title 43, Code of Federal
23 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment),
24 with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the
25 Secretary of the Interior;

1 (2) section 402.05 of title 50, Code of Federal
2 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment);

3 (3) section 800.12 of title 36, Code of Federal
4 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment),
5 except that any reference contained in that regula-
6 tion to an “agency official” shall be considered to be
7 a reference to a responsible official;

8 (4) section 1b.9(v) of title 7, Code of Federal
9 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment);

10 (5) section 1b.9(w) of title 7, Code of Federal
11 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment);

12 (6) section 46.150 of title 43, Code of Federal
13 Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment);
14 and

15 (7) section 40807 of the Infrastructure Invest-
16 ment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592c).

17 (c) CONSOLIDATION.—The report referenced in this
18 subsection (a) may be included in the materials submitted
19 to Congress in support of the President’s budget pursuant
20 to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code.

21 **SEC. 21205. WILDLAND FIRE PERFORMANCE METRICS.**

22 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after
23 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall sub-
24 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a report
25 on existing key performance indicators and potential out-

1 come-based performance measures to reduce wildfire risk
2 on Federal land.

3 (b) INCLUSIONS.—The report submitted under sub-
4 section (a) shall identify solutions to track the implemen-
5 tation and effectiveness of hazardous fuels reduction ac-
6 tivities and forest restoration treatments, including strate-
7 gies—

8 (1) to track whether land management activities
9 are reducing wildfire hazards and ways to quantify
10 and track acres in maintenance status;

11 (2) to track place-based and locally led out-
12 comes;

13 (3) to standardize national-level monitoring
14 measures;

15 (4) to quantify catastrophic wildfire risk reduc-
16 tion;

17 (5) to quantify carbon sequestration and cli-
18 mate resilience;

19 (6) to quantify forest biodiversity and wildfire
20 resilience, including as related to—

21 (A) recreational services;

22 (B) watershed conditions;

23 (C) soil health and productivity;

24 (D) fish and wildlife habitat;

1 (E) water quantity and quality protection;
2 and

3 (F) late successional ecosystems.

4 (7) to identify modeling and data challenges
5 that are preventing the transition to annual wildfire
6 risk mapping updates; and

7 (8) to integrate advanced technologies or a
8 combination of technologies and analyses that will
9 benefit the quality of information reported.

10 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

14 (A) the Committee on Energy and Natural
15 Resources of the Senate;

16 (B) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
17 tion, and Forestry of the Senate;

18 (C) the Committee on Natural Resources
19 of the House of Representatives; and

20 (D) the Committee on Agriculture of the
21 House of Representatives.

22 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
23 the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
24 Chief of the Forest Service.

1 **TITLE II—EFFECTIVE WILDFIRE**
2 **RESPONSE AND TECHNOLOGY**

3 **SEC. 22001. MONITORING WILDFIRES BY SATELLITE.**

4 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

5 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
6 ty” means a State forester, emergency manager, or
7 equivalent State official.

8 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
9 the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Di-
10 rector of the United States Geological Survey.

11 (b) GRANT PROGRAM TO MONITOR WILDFIRES BY
12 SATELLITE.—

13 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year
14 after the date of the enactment of this section, the
15 Secretary shall establish a competitive grant pro-
16 gram under which the Secretary shall make at least
17 3 grants to eligible entities to monitor wildfires by
18 satellite (in this section referred to as the “Pro-
19 gram”).

20 (2) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—Each eligible entity
21 awarded a grant under the Program shall only use
22 such grant to—

23 (A) purchase and integrate, through a pub-
24 lic-private partnership, high-resolution multi-
25 and hyper-spectral full spectrum imaging capa-

1 bility from visible, near-infrared, shortwave in-
2 frared, thermal infrared, and radar data from
3 the latest-generation of wildfire monitoring sat-
4 ellites; and

5 (B) use the data acquired under subpara-
6 graph (A), as well as any analyses relating to
7 such data, to detect, assess, respond to, and
8 manage wildfires, with an emphasis on—

9 (i) monitoring active fire behavior,
10 burned area, intensity, and severity;

11 (ii) ensuring the safety and effective-
12 ness of prescribed fire treatments; and

13 (iii) guiding post-fire risk assessment
14 and disaster recovery.

15 (3) APPLICATION.—To be eligible for a grant
16 under the Program, an eligible entity shall submit to
17 the Secretary an application at such time, in such
18 manner, and containing such information as the Sec-
19 retary may require.

20 (4) GRANT AMOUNT.—Each grant awarded
21 under the Program shall be in an amount the Sec-
22 retary determines appropriate.

23 (5) REPORT.—Not later than the last day of
24 the second fiscal year beginning after the date of the

1 enactment of this section, the Secretary shall submit
2 to Congress a report that includes—

3 (A) the number of applications received for
4 a grant under the Program;

5 (B) details of each eligible entity that was
6 awarded a grant under the Program;

7 (C) the impact of the Program on wildfire
8 prevention;

9 (D) any recommendation that the Sec-
10 retary determines appropriate to establish the
11 Program as a long-term grant program; and

12 (E) any other information on the effective-
13 ness of the Program that the Secretary deter-
14 mines appropriate.

15 (c) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
16 authorized to be appropriated to the Secretary
17 \$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2036
18 to carry out the Program.

19 **SEC. 22002. REQUIREMENTS RELATING TO CERTAIN FIRE**
20 **SUPPRESSION COST SHARE AGREEMENTS.**

21 (a) SECRETARIES DEFINED.—In this section, the
22 term “Secretaries” means—

23 (1) the Secretary of Agriculture;

24 (2) the Secretary of the Interior; and

25 (3) the Secretary of Homeland Security.

1 (b) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARD OPERATING
2 PROCEDURES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of
3 the enactment of this section, the Secretaries shall—

4 (1) establish standard operating procedures re-
5 lating to payment timelines for fire suppression cost
6 share agreements established under the Act of May
7 27, 1955 (42 U.S.C. 1856a) (commonly known as
8 the “Reciprocal Fire Protection Act”); and

9 (2) with respect to each fire suppression cost
10 share agreement in operation on such date—

11 (A) review each such agreement; and

12 (B) modify each agreement as necessary to
13 comply with the standard operating procedures
14 required under paragraph (1).

15 (c) ALIGNMENT OF FIRE SUPPRESSION COST SHARE
16 AGREEMENTS WITH COOPERATIVE FIRE PROTECTION
17 AGREEMENTS.—The standard operating procedures re-
18 quired under subsection (b)(1) shall include a requirement
19 that each fire suppression cost share agreement be aligned
20 with each of the cooperative fire protection agreements ap-
21 plicable to the entity subject to such fire suppression cost
22 share agreement.

23 (d) PAYMENTS PURSUANT TO COST SHARE AGREE-
24 MENTS.—With respect to payments made pursuant to fire
25 suppression cost share agreements, the standard operating

1 procedures required under subsection (b)(1) shall require
2 that the Federal paying entity reimburse a local fire de-
3 partment or a State wildland firefighter agency if such
4 fire department or agency submits an invoice in accord-
5 ance with cost settlement procedures.

6 (e) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
7 gress that the Secretaries should carry out reciprocal fire
8 suppression cost share agreement repayments to local fire
9 suppression organizations as soon as practicable after fire
10 suppression occurs but not later than 1 year after fire sup-
11 pression occurs.

12 **SEC. 22003. WILDFIRE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ADVI-**
13 **SORY BOARD.**

14 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior
15 shall establish a permanent advisory committee to be
16 known as the Wildfire Science and Technology Advisory
17 Board (in this section referred to as the “Board”).

18 (b) DUTIES.—The Board shall—

19 (1) coordinate the operationalization within the
20 Federal Government of wildfire research, including
21 by—

22 (A) identifying avenues for translating
23 wildfire research into practical applications;

1 (B) establishing criteria and frameworks to
2 prioritize wildfire research projects for
3 operationalization;

4 (C) facilitating the transition of prioritized
5 wildfire research into operational projects;

6 (D) connecting and supporting entities in
7 wildfire research and operations;

8 (E) providing feedback to refine and en-
9 hance wildfire research outputs for practical ap-
10 plication; and

11 (F) partnering, as the Board determines
12 appropriate, with private sector and federally-
13 funded research centers to further the work of
14 the Board;

15 (2) encourage wildfire researchers and Federal
16 agencies undertaking wildfire operations to in-
17 clude—

18 (A) relevant disciplines, such as public
19 health, meteorological science, and predictive
20 modeling; and

21 (B) consideration of built and natural fire-
22 prone environments; and

23 (3) disseminate information, including by—

24 (A) establishing mechanisms, such as
25 newsletters and publications, online portals,

1 webinars, and workshops, to disseminate wild-
2 fire research findings, operational best prac-
3 tices, and resources to relevant stakeholders
4 and practitioners; and

5 (B) promoting activities of the Board to
6 ensure visibility and accessibility to stake-
7 holders.

8 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—

9 (1) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Board
10 shall be composed of the following members:

11 (A) The Secretary of the Interior (or the
12 designee thereof).

13 (B) The Secretary of Agriculture (or the
14 designee thereof).

15 (C) The Secretary of Commerce (or the
16 designee thereof).

17 (D) The Chief of the Forest Service (or
18 the designee thereof).

19 (E) The Director of the Bureau of Indian
20 Affairs (or the designee thereof).

21 (F) The Director of the Bureau of Land
22 Management (or the designee thereof).

23 (G) The Administrator of the Federal
24 Emergency Management Agency (or the des-
25 ignee thereof, except that such designee may

1 not be the member of the Board serving pursu-
2 ant to subparagraph (H)).

3 (H) The United States Fire Administrator
4 (or the designee thereof).

5 (I) The Director of the United States Fish
6 and Wildlife Service (or the designee thereof).

7 (J) The Administrator of the National
8 Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (or
9 the designee thereof).

10 (K) The Director of the National Park
11 Service (or the designee thereof).

12 (L) The Director of the National Institute
13 of Standards and Technology (or the designee
14 thereof).

15 (M) The Director of the United States Ge-
16 ological Survey (or the designee thereof).

17 (N) The Director of the Office of Science
18 and Technology Policy (or the designee there-
19 of).

20 (O) The Director of the National Science
21 Foundation (or designee thereof).

22 (P) The Administrator of the National
23 Aeronautics and Space Administration (or des-
24 ignee thereof).

1 (Q) The Director of the Centers for Dis-
2 ease Control and Prevention (or designee there-
3 of).

4 (R) The Administrator of the Environ-
5 mental Protection Agency (or designee thereof).

6 (S) Not more than 18 non-Federal mem-
7 bers, to be appointed by the Secretary of the
8 Interior, as follows:

9 (i) At least 1 representative from each
10 of the following:

11 (I) State government.

12 (II) Local government.

13 (III) Tribal government.

14 (ii) Representatives of fire depart-
15 ments.

16 (iii) Representatives of relevant pri-
17 vate-sector entities, such as codes and
18 standards-setting organizations, prescribed
19 fire associations, and entities with exper-
20 tise in wildfire science and wildfire risk
21 identification, transfer, and mitigation.

22 (iv) Wildfire, forest health, or ecologi-
23 cal restoration researchers.

24 (v) Public health experts.

25 (vi) Meteorological scientists.

1 (vii) Predictive modeling experts.

2 (viii) Such other members as the Sec-
3 retary of the Interior deems appropriate.

4 (2) TERMS.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—Each member of the
6 Board serving pursuant to paragraph (1)(S)
7 shall be appointed for a term of 2 years.

8 (B) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Board
9 shall be filled in the manner in which the origi-
10 nal appointment was made.

11 (3) PAY AND EXPENSES.—

12 (A) PROHIBITION ON COMPENSATION.—A
13 member of the Board shall serve without com-
14 pensation.

15 (B) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member of
16 the Board shall receive travel expenses, includ-
17 ing per diem in lieu of subsistence, in accord-
18 ance with applicable provisions under sub-
19 chapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States
20 Code.

21 (4) CHAIRPERSON.—

22 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
23 subparagraph (B), the Chairperson shall rotate
24 annually among the members of the Board
25 serving pursuant to subparagraphs (A), (B),

1 and (C) of paragraph (1), beginning with the
2 member serving pursuant to paragraph (1)(A),
3 followed by the member serving pursuant to
4 paragraph (1)(B).

5 (B) EXCEPTION.—For any term, the mem-
6 bers of the Board may designate a member of
7 the Board to serve as the Chairperson of the
8 Board in lieu of the official (or the designee
9 thereof) who would otherwise serve as the
10 Chairperson pursuant to subparagraph (A).

11 (5) STAFF; TEMPORARY AND INTERMITTENT
12 SERVICES.—

13 (A) STAFF.—The Board may appoint per-
14 sonnel as it considers appropriate.

15 (B) PAY.—The Chairperson of the Board
16 may fix the compensation of the personnel ap-
17 pointed under subparagraph (A) without regard
18 to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter
19 III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code,
20 relating to classification of positions and Gen-
21 eral Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of
22 pay for such personnel may not exceed the an-
23 nual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of
24 the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of
25 such title.

1 (C) DETAIL OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—

2 The head of any Federal department or agency
3 may detail any of the personnel of that depart-
4 ment or agency to the Board. A detail under
5 the preceding sentence shall be without reim-
6 bursement and without interruption or loss of
7 civil service status or privilege.

8 (D) PROCUREMENT OF TEMPORARY AND
9 INTERMITTENT SERVICES.—The Chairperson of
10 the Board may procure temporary and intermit-
11 tent services under section 3109(b) of title 5,
12 United States Code, at rates for individuals
13 that do not exceed the daily equivalent of the
14 annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V
15 of the Executive Schedule under section 5316
16 of that title.

17 (d) REPORT.—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than the date that
19 is 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act,
20 the Board shall submit a report to the relevant con-
21 gressional committees, which shall—

22 (A) detail the activities of the Board;

23 (B) discuss progress on transitioning wild-
24 fire research into operations within the Federal
25 Government;

1 (C) discuss barriers to successfully
2 transitioning wildfire research into operations
3 within the Federal Government; and

4 (D) provide recommendations on future
5 wildfire research priorities and operational
6 needs.

7 (2) RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
8 TEES.—In this subsection, the term “relevant con-
9 gressional committees” means—

10 (A) the Committees on Agriculture; Nat-
11 ural Resources; Science, Space, and Tech-
12 nology; and Transportation and Infrastructure
13 of the House of Representatives; and

14 (B) the Committees on Agriculture, Nutri-
15 tion, and Forestry; Commerce, Science, and
16 Transportation; Energy and Natural Resources;
17 Environment and Public Works; and Homeland
18 Security and Governmental Affairs of the Sen-
19 ate.

20 (e) TERMINATION.—Section 1013(a)(2) of title 5,
21 United States Code, shall not apply to the Board.

22 (f) FUNDING.—

23 (1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

24 There is authorized to be appropriated \$10,000,000

1 to carry out this section, to remain available until
2 expended.

3 (2) **ADDITIONAL FUNDING.**—In addition to the
4 amounts made available pursuant to paragraph (1),
5 the Federal members of the Board may, for pur-
6 poses of carrying out this section, use amounts
7 whose purpose is not otherwise specified by the ap-
8 propriations laws available to the employing agencies
9 of such members.

10 **SEC. 22004. IMPROVEMENTS TO WILDFIRE FORAGE LOSS**
11 **PROGRAMS.**

12 (a) **LIVESTOCK FORAGE PROGRAM.**—Section
13 1501(c)(4)(A)(ii) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (7
14 U.S.C. 9081(c)(4)(A)(ii)) is amended by inserting “(in-
15 cluding a prescribed fire, beneficial fire, and wildfire man-
16 aged for resource objectives)” before the period.

17 (b) **EMERGENCY LIVESTOCK ASSISTANCE PRO-**
18 **GRAM.**—Section 1501(d)(1) of the Agricultural Act of
19 2014 (7 U.S.C. 9081(d)(1)) is amended by striking “and
20 wildfires” and inserting “, wildfires, beneficial fires, pre-
21 scribed fires, and wildfires managed for resource objec-
22 tives”.

23 **SEC. 22005. JOINT OFFICE OF THE FIRE ENVIRONMENT**
24 **CENTER.**

25 (a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

1 (1) ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.—The term “ar-
2 tificial intelligence” has the meaning given such
3 term in section 5002 of the National Artificial Intel-
4 ligence Initiative Act of 2020 (15 U.S.C. 9401).

5 (2) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the
6 Board of the Joint Office.

7 (3) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
8 the Director of the Joint Office.

9 (4) JOINT OFFICE.—The term “Joint Office”
10 means the Joint Office of the Fire Environment
11 Center under subsection (b)(1).

12 (5) MACHINE LEARNING.—The term “machine
13 learning” has the meaning given such term in sec-
14 tion 5002 of the National Artificial Intelligence Ini-
15 tiative Act of 2020 (15 U.S.C. 9401).

16 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
18 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Ad-
19 ministrator of the National Oceanic and Atmos-
20 pheric Administration shall establish a joint office,
21 which shall be known as the “Joint Office of the
22 Fire Environment Center”.

23 (2) STRUCTURE.—The Joint Office shall be
24 composed of the following components:

1 (A) Technology and Engineering, which
2 shall focus on modeling and the building and
3 testing of technology and may enter into public-
4 private partnerships.

5 (B) Data Services, which shall be respon-
6 sible for the following:

7 (i) Testing artificial intelligence and
8 machine learning to support managers,
9 firefighters, and public health officials on
10 the ground, including by producing deci-
11 sion consequence data (including informa-
12 tion and metrics used to forecast, evaluate,
13 and measure outcomes of proposed courses
14 of action), modeling risk, and suggesting
15 resources based on fire and smoke condi-
16 tions at the time and place of ignition de-
17 tection.

18 (ii) Working with State, local, and
19 Tribal entities with respect to data shar-
20 ing.

21 (C) Analysis and Prediction.

22 (D) Education and Consultation, which
23 shall be responsible for incident management.

24 (E) Any other component determined nec-
25 essary or appropriate by the Board.

1 (c) FUNCTIONS.—

2 (1) IN GENERAL.—

3 (A) AVAILABILITY OF PRODUCTS AND IN-
4 FORMATION.—The Joint Office shall make
5 available to the following the products and in-
6 formation developed by the Joint Office:

7 (i) Geographic area coordination cen-
8 ters.

9 (ii) Incident management teams.

10 (iii) Land managers.

11 (iv) Air quality and water provider
12 agencies.

13 (v) State, local, and Tribal govern-
14 ments.

15 (vi) Public health agencies.

16 (B) SERVICES AND SUPPORT.—The Joint
17 Office shall provide real-time, science-based,
18 and data-rich scientific and technical analytic
19 services, decision support, and predictive serv-
20 ices, to inform land and fuels management,
21 community risk reduction, and fire management
22 and response, including the following:

23 (i) Pre-fire mitigation and risk reduc-
24 tion activities for landscapes and commu-

1 nities, including through assessments and
2 modeling of the following:

3 (I) Climate condition.

4 (II) Fuels.

5 (III) Home ignition.

6 (IV) Structure-to-structure
7 spread.

8 (V) Values-at-risk.

9 (ii) Activities that better protect pub-
10 lic health and safety during and after a
11 fire, including the following:

12 (I) Mapping services and data
13 provision to support evacuation deci-
14 sions in communities at risk.

15 (II) Air quality monitoring and
16 data forecasting to support health risk
17 information that helps protect the
18 public from smoke impacts associated
19 with fire.

20 (iii) Fire response and management,
21 including the following:

22 (I) Response preparedness and
23 initial attack readiness for new fires.

24 (II) Deployment of response re-
25 sources.

1 (III) Firefighter movement deci-
2 sions during active fire management.

3 (iv) Post-fire activities, including with
4 respect to the following:

5 (I) Vegetation recovery.

6 (II) Debris flows and flooding.

7 (III) Watershed protection.

8 (IV) Ecosystem health.

9 (C) COORDINATION.—The Administrator
10 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Ad-
11 ministration, in coordination with each of the
12 agencies specified in subparagraphs (B)
13 through (J) of subsection (d)(1), shall operate
14 as a collective entity to produce accessible prod-
15 ucts and services for a variety of users and uses
16 in fire management, including by carrying out
17 the following:

18 (i) Developing timely, manager-fo-
19 cused models, technologies, assessments,
20 and forecasts, to support fire operational
21 decision-making and short- and long-term
22 fire planning.

23 (ii) Integrating the existing specialties
24 of the constituent land management, com-

1 munity preparedness, and public health
2 agencies.

3 (2) TECHNOLOGICAL COMMON OPERATING EN-
4 VIRONMENT.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Joint Office shall
6 develop a technological common operating envi-
7 ronment for practitioners across the spectrum
8 of risk mitigation, prescribed fire, response, and
9 post-disaster response, to guide the development
10 of highly dynamic decision support tools.

11 (B) PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION.—The
12 Joint Office shall ensure public health informa-
13 tion that is essential to integrate into the com-
14 mon operating environment under subpara-
15 graph (A) is provided to Federal, State, and
16 local public health agencies ensure the products
17 of the Joint Office accurately reflect the depth
18 and breadth of wildfire issues, including with
19 respect to air quality data, forecasts, and infor-
20 mation pertaining to the built environment.

21 (d) BOARD OF THE JOINT OFFICE.—

22 (1) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Joint
23 Office shall be governed by a board that is composed
24 of 14 members, as follows:

1 (A) One member who is a career employee
2 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Ad-
3 ministration, appointed by the Administrator of
4 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin-
5 istration.

6 (B) One member who is a career employee
7 of the United States Fire Administration, ap-
8 pointed by the Administrator of the United
9 States Fire Administration.

10 (C) One member who is a career employee
11 of the Federal Emergency Management Agency,
12 appointed by the Administrator of the Federal
13 Emergency Management Agency.

14 (D) One member who is a career employee
15 of the National Weather Service, appointed by
16 the Director of the National Weather Service.

17 (E) One member who is a career employee
18 of the Forest Service, appointed by the Chief of
19 the Forest Service.

20 (F) One member who is a career employee
21 of the Department of the Interior, appointed by
22 the Secretary of the Interior.

23 (G) One member who is a career employee
24 of the Bureau of Land Management, appointed

1 by the Director of the Bureau of Land Manage-
2 ment.

3 (H) One member who is a career employee
4 of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, appointed by
5 the Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

6 (I) One member who is a career employee
7 of the National Park Service, appointed by the
8 Director of the National Park Service.

9 (J) One member who is a career employee
10 of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service,
11 appointed by the Director of the United States
12 Fish and Wildlife Service.

13 (K) Two members who are non-Federal
14 representatives of the wildfire community (such
15 as representatives of nongovernmental organiza-
16 tions, State or local fire agencies with signifi-
17 cant wildland fire expertise, or relevant unions)
18 appointed by the Board.

19 (L) Two members who are State represen-
20 tations of the wildfire community, appointed by
21 the Board.

22 (2) TERMS.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
24 subparagraphs (B) and (C), each member of

1 the Board shall be appointed for a term of five
2 years.

3 (B) TERMS OF INITIAL APPOINTEES.—For
4 the members first appointed to the Board, the
5 following apply:

6 (i) The members appointed under sub-
7 paragraphs (I) and (J) of paragraph (1)
8 shall be appointed for terms of one year.

9 (ii) The members appointed under
10 subparagraphs (D) and (G) of such para-
11 graph shall be appointed for terms of two
12 years.

13 (iii) The members appointed under
14 subparagraphs (K) and (L) of such para-
15 graph shall be appointed for terms of two
16 years, which may be extended at the dis-
17 cretion of the Administrator.

18 (iv) The members appointed under
19 subparagraphs (F) and (H) of such para-
20 graph shall be appointed for terms of three
21 years.

22 (v) The members appointed under
23 subparagraphs (C) and (E) of such para-
24 graph shall be appointed for terms of four
25 years.

1 (C) VACANCIES.—A member of the Board
2 appointed to fill a vacancy occurring before the
3 expiration of the term for which such member's
4 predecessor was appointed shall be appointed
5 only for the remainder of such term. Such
6 member may serve after the expiration of such
7 term until a successor has taken office. A va-
8 cancy in the Board shall be filled in the manner
9 in which the original appointment was made.

10 (3) PROHIBITION OF COMPENSATION OF FED-
11 ERAL EMPLOYEES.—A member of the Board who is
12 a career employee of the United States may not re-
13 ceive additional pay, allowances, or benefits by rea-
14 son of service on the Board.

15 (4) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—Each member of the
16 Board shall receive travel expenses, including per
17 diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with appli-
18 cable provisions under subchapter I of chapter 57 of
19 title 5, United States Code.

20 (5) QUORUM.—Nine members of the Board
21 shall constitute a quorum.

22 (6) CHAIRPERSON; VICE CHAIRPERSON.—The
23 Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of the Board
24 shall be elected by the members of the Board. The

1 term of office of the Chairperson and Vice Chair-
2 person shall be one year.

3 (7) MEETINGS.—The Board shall meet not less
4 frequently than quarterly and at a call of a majority
5 of the members of the Board.

6 (e) DIRECTOR AND STAFF OF JOINT OFFICE; EX-
7 PERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—

8 (1) DIRECTOR.—The Joint Office shall have a
9 Director who shall be appointed by the Board. To
10 the extent or in the amounts provided in advance in
11 appropriation Acts, the Director shall be paid at a
12 rate of basic pay not to exceed the rate of basic pay
13 for level II of the Executive Schedule. The budget
14 and decision-making authority for the Joint Office is
15 vested in the Director.

16 (2) CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER, CHIEF FI-
17 NANCIAL OFFICER, CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER,
18 AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER.—With the ap-
19 proval of the Board, the Director may appoint a
20 Chief Information Officer, Chief Financial Officer,
21 Chief Technology Officer, and Chief Operating Offi-
22 cer.

23 (3) STAFF.—With the approval of the Board,
24 the Director may appoint at least 100 personnel and

1 may appoint such additional personnel as the Direc-
2 tor considers appropriate.

3 (4) APPLICABILITY OF CERTAIN CIVIL SERVICE
4 LAWS.—The Director and staff of the Joint Office
5 shall be appointed subject to the provisions of title
6 5, United States Code, governing appointments in
7 the competitive service, and shall be paid in accord-
8 ance with the provisions of chapter 51 and sub-
9 chapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to
10 classification and General Schedule pay rates.

11 (5) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—With the
12 approval of the Board, the Director may procure
13 temporary and intermittent services under section
14 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, but at rates
15 for individuals not to exceed the daily equivalent of
16 the maximum annual rate of basic pay under the
17 General Schedule.

18 (6) STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Upon re-
19 quest of the Director, the head of a Federal depart-
20 ment or agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis,
21 any of the personnel of such department or agency,
22 as the case may be, to the Joint Office to assist in
23 carrying out the duties of the Joint Office.

1 (f) CONTRACT AUTHORITY.—The Joint Office may
2 contract with and compensate government and private
3 agencies or persons for supplies and services.

4 (g) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the functions
5 under this section, the Joint Office is encouraged to con-
6 sult with and share relevant data with the Administrator
7 of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Adminis-
8 trator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administra-
9 tion, the Director of the United States Geological Survey,
10 and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and
11 Prevention.

12 (h) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
13 authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of the
14 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to
15 carry out this section \$150,000,000 for each of fiscal
16 years 2027 through 2036.

17 **SEC. 22006. INTERAGENCY DATA COLLABORATION ENVI-**
18 **RONMENT.**

19 (a) EXPANSION OF INFORMATION SYSTEM.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year
21 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Ad-
22 ministrator of the United States Fire Administration
23 shall expand the National Emergency Response In-
24 formation System to include real-time information
25 and analytics tools relating to the following:

1 (A) Prescribed fires.

2 (B) Wildfires that do not impact structures
3 and infrastructure.

4 (2) MANNER.—The Administrator of the
5 United States Fire Administration shall carry out
6 the expansion under paragraph (1) in a manner
7 compatible with, and shared with, existing wildland
8 fire information collection at the Joint Office of the
9 Fire Environment Center established under section
10 22005.

11 (b) WILDFIRE DIGITAL DATA CENTER.—

12 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of
13 the United States Fire Administration shall estab-
14 lish a data center to be known as the “Wildfire Dig-
15 ital Data Center”. The Wildfire Digital Data Center
16 shall be a public, government, scientific research
17 data catalog and repository available to assist in re-
18 search by the wildfire community and to share rel-
19 evant data.

20 (2) DATA AND MODELING COLLABORATION EN-
21 VIRONMENT.—The Wildfire Digital Data Center
22 shall include a data and modeling collaboration envi-
23 ronment for researchers across the wildfire commu-
24 nity to engage with data across agencies and dis-
25 ciplines.

1 (3) PUBLIC ACCESS.—The Administrator of the
2 United States Fire Administration shall ensure the
3 Wildfire Digital Data Center is in compliance with
4 the guidance on public access policies as specified in
5 the memorandum entitled “Ensuring Free, Imme-
6 diate, and Equitable Access to Federally Funded Re-
7 search” and issued by the Office of Science and
8 Technology Policy on August 25, 2022.

9 (4) REPOSITORY.—The repository of the Wild-
10 fire Digital Data Center shall include information on
11 the following:

12 (A) Outcomes and impacts of wildfire and
13 associated management actions.

14 (B) Real-time data on new fire starts.

15 (C) The effectiveness of wildfire risk miti-
16 gation measures.

17 (D) Public health research related to
18 wildland fire and fires in the built environment.

19 (5) WEBSITE.—The Administrator of the
20 United States Fire Administration shall coordinate
21 with the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the
22 Chief of the Forest Service, to include on the pub-
23 licly accessible website of the Wildfire Digital Data
24 Center information relating to the following:

1 (A) Post-wildfire impacts, and State and
2 Federal programs and funding opportunities to
3 address such impacts.

4 (B) State and Federal best practices relat-
5 ing to the short- and long-term mitigation of
6 wildfire.

7 (C) Ecological recovery, assessment
8 science, and State and Federal emergency dec-
9 laration processes, with respect to wildfire.

10 (6) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
11 section may be construed to affect the ownership of
12 data sources by individual agencies.

13 (c) FINDABLE, ACCESSIBLE, INTEROPERABLE, AND
14 REUSABLE REQUIREMENT.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator of the
16 United States Fire Administration, the Secretary of
17 the Interior, the Administrator of the Federal Emer-
18 gency Management Agency, and the Chief of the
19 Forest Service, through the Wildfire Digital Data
20 Center, the Department of the Interior Library, the
21 National Emergency Training Center Library, and
22 the National Forest Service Library, respectively,
23 shall provide services to make federally funded
24 wildland and structural fire research data systems

1 and data products findable, accessible, interoperable,
2 and reusable (FAIR).

3 (2) INTEGRATION.—The Administrator of the
4 United States Fire Administration shall integrate
5 the services required under paragraph (1) with the
6 National Emergency Response Information System
7 to better collect data and model the built environ-
8 ment.

9 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
10 authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of the
11 United States Fire Administration to carry out this sec-
12 tion \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through
13 2036.

14 **SEC. 22007. STUDY ON WILDFIRE MITIGATION ACROSS**
15 **LAND OWNERSHIP BOUNDARIES.**

16 (a) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Comptroller General of
17 the United States shall conduct a study on—

18 (1) the existing Federal programs, rules, and
19 authorities that enable or inhibit wildfire mitigation
20 from being completed across land ownership bound-
21 aries on Federal and non-Federal land;

22 (2) whether changes to any program, rule, or
23 authority (including changes to existing statutory
24 definitions) identified pursuant to paragraph (1)
25 would—

1 (A) allow a covered agency increased ca-
2 pacity or access to funding to mitigate wildfires
3 or improve forest health; and

4 (B) enable better community protection
5 and prevent the loss of structures due to wild-
6 fire; and

7 (3) the activities carried out pursuant to a cov-
8 ered authority, including—

9 (A) how to improve the efficacy of such ac-
10 tivities with respect to mitigating wildfire; and

11 (B) whether the enactment of such covered
12 authority has increased capacity or access to
13 funding to mitigate wildfires for a covered
14 agency.

15 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date
16 of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of
17 the United States shall submit to the Committee on Nat-
18 ural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture of the
19 House of Representatives and the Committee on Energy
20 and Natural Resources and the Committee on Agriculture,
21 Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate a report that con-
22 tains—

23 (1) the results of the study required under sub-
24 section (a); and

1 (2) recommendations to simplify cross-boundary
2 wildfire mitigation between Federal land manage-
3 ment agencies and State, local, and Tribal govern-
4 ments.

5 (c) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) COVERED AGENCY.—The term “covered
7 agency” means—

8 (A) each Federal land management agency
9 (as defined in section 802 of the Federal Lands
10 Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C.
11 6801));

12 (B) the Natural Resources Conservation
13 Service;

14 (C) the Environmental Protection Agency;

15 (D) the Federal Emergency Management
16 Agency;

17 (E) the United States Fire Administration;

18 (F) States;

19 (G) Indian Tribes; and

20 (H) local governments.

21 (2) COVERED AUTHORITY.—The term “covered
22 authority” means—

23 (A) the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of
24 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6501 et seq.);

1 (B) the Cooperative Forestry Assistance
2 Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.);

3 (C) the good neighbor authority under sec-
4 tion 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16
5 U.S.C. 2113a);

6 (D) the Tribal Forest Protection Act of
7 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3101 et seq.);

8 (E) the collaborative forest landscape res-
9 toration program under section 4003 of the
10 Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009
11 (16 U.S.C. 7303); and

12 (F) any other statutory authority that fa-
13 cilitates cross-boundary wildfire mitigation or
14 forest health improvement activities, as deter-
15 mined by the Comptroller General of the United
16 States.

17 **SEC. 22008. QUADRENNIAL FIRE REVIEW.**

18 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

19 (1) RELEVANT COMMITTEES.—The term “rel-
20 evant committees” means—

21 (A) the Committees on Natural Resources,
22 Agriculture, Homeland Security, and Science,
23 Space, and Technology of the House of Rep-
24 resentatives; and

1 (B) the Committees on Energy and Nat-
2 ural Resources, Agriculture, Homeland Security
3 and Governmental Affairs, and Commerce,
4 Science, and Transportation of the Senate.

5 (2) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
6 means the—

7 (A) Secretary of Agriculture, acting
8 through the Chief of the Forest Service, or
9 their designee;

10 (B) the Secretary of the Interior or their
11 designee; and

12 (C) the Secretary of Homeland Security or
13 their designee.

14 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall jointly con-
15 duct a quadrennial review of the comprehensive wildfire
16 environment in the United States for the purpose of—

17 (1) identifying the greatest challenges for
18 wildland fire management over the preceding 10-
19 year and 20-year timeframes; and

20 (2) developing long-term, strategic actions to
21 address the challenges identified under paragraph
22 (1).

23 (c) CONTENTS.—The quadrennial review conducted
24 under subsection (b) shall include—

1 (1) a summary of the most significant chal-
2 lenges relating to wildfire and wildland fire manage-
3 ment that are anticipated during the 10-year and
4 20-year periods immediately following the report;

5 (2) recommendations regarding such Federal
6 legislation and administrative actions as the Secre-
7 taries determine necessary to address the challenges
8 described in paragraph (1);

9 (3) an evaluation of any progress made toward
10 any relevant recommendations suggested by a wild-
11 fire report conducted in the preceding 10 years and
12 carried out by the Government Accountability Office,
13 a congressionally authorized commission; or by an
14 agency under the jurisdiction of one of the Secre-
15 taries (including any Inspectors General reports and
16 the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management
17 Strategy);

18 (4) a quantitative analysis of changes to built
19 and natural environments since the most recent
20 quadrennial fire review and the impact of such
21 changes on pre-fire mitigation, wildfire incident re-
22 sponse, and proactive recovery from wildfire;

23 (5) an analysis of the intersection between wild-
24 fire and public health, conducted in coordination
25 with the Administrator of the Environmental Protec-

1 tion Agency and Secretary of Health and Human
2 Services, acting through the Center for Disease Con-
3 trol and Prevention; and

4 (6) projected future scenarios to highlight areas
5 of consideration for realignment of programs, strate-
6 gies, capabilities, and the workforce that will assist
7 the Secretaries in addressing the challenges de-
8 scribed in paragraph (1).

9 (d) COLLABORATION.—The Secretaries may jointly
10 carry out the report under subsection (b) with any State,
11 Tribal, local, or nongovernmental entities with experience
12 in wildland fire management, as determined by the Secre-
13 taries.

14 (e) FREQUENCY.—Not later than 12 months after
15 the date of the enactment of this section, and every 4
16 years thereafter, the Secretaries shall jointly conduct the
17 report under subsection (b) and submit it to the relevant
18 committees.

19 (f) INCLUSION OF CURRENT ASSESSMENTS.—In car-
20 rying out this section, the Secretaries may, to the extent
21 practicable, rely on assessments completed or data gath-
22 ered in the preceding four years.

1 **SEC. 22009. THE WILDLAND DYNAMIC RISK MAPPING PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the
4 date of the enactment of this Act, the Administrator of
5 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
6 shall work jointly with the Administrator of the National
7 Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Director of the
8 United States Geological Survey, the Administrator of the
9 United States Fire Administration, and the National Lab-
10 oratories (as such term is defined in section 2 of the En-
11 ergy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801)) and seek to
12 work with institutions of higher education (as such term
13 is defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of
14 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)), to carry out the following:

15 (1) Develop dynamic risk and hazard maps for
16 the wildland and built environments in the United
17 States.

18 (2) Ensure the following:

19 (A) Such maps are updated each wildfire
20 season to reflect changes in the natural environ-
21 ment, such as postflood or fire alterations, and
22 rapidly changing environmental conditions.

23 (B) Such maps measure changes in fuels
24 moisture on the temporal scale.

25 (C) Such maps utilize remote sensing tech-
26 nology and on-the-ground monitoring.

1 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
2 authorized to be appropriated to the Administrator of the
3 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to
4 carry out this section \$15,000,000 for each of fiscal years
5 2027 through 2036.

6 **SEC. 22010. REPORT ON RADIO COMMUNICATIONS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the
8 date of enactment of this Act, the Federal Emergency
9 Management Administrator, acting through the United
10 States Fire Administrator and in coordination with the
11 Chief of the Forest Service, shall prepare a report relating
12 to insufficient radio frequencies, barriers to interoper-
13 ability of radio frequencies, and available products and
14 technologies for overcoming barriers to interoperability for
15 wildfire management.

16 (b) COOPERATION.—In preparing the report under
17 subsection (a), the Administrator shall cooperate with—

18 (1) the Secretary of Agriculture;

19 (2) agencies responsible for the management of
20 Federal land;

21 (3) State fire marshals;

22 (4) State and local emergency response agen-
23 cies;

24 (5) Tribal fire departments and emergency
25 managers; and

1 (6) municipal fire departments, fire protection
2 districts, and volunteer fire departments in relevant
3 communities.

4 (c) COMPATIBILITY; ADDITIONAL FREQUENCIES.—

5 The report under subsection (a) shall include—

6 (1) a determination on whether the entities de-
7 scribed in subsection (b) have the ability to commu-
8 nicate by way of radio during a potential fire sup-
9 pression effort for a community conflagration;

10 (2) a determination on whether—

11 (A) the reserved radio frequencies are suf-
12 ficient for wildfire management; or

13 (B) additional frequencies, listed by type
14 and location, are recommended to be reserved
15 or obtained;

16 (3) an analysis of commercially available tech-
17 nology and products to enable radios from multiple
18 agencies operating on different radio frequencies to
19 be interoperable; and

20 (4) if the Administrator determines under para-
21 graph (1) that any entities do not have the ability
22 to communicate, a plan for ensuring such entities
23 would be able to communicate adequately during a
24 fire suppression effort for a community conflagra-
25 tion.

1 **SEC. 22011. RESILIENCE ACCELERATOR DEMONSTRATION**
2 **PROGRAM.**

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term “Na-
5 tional Laboratory” has the meaning given such term
6 in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42
7 U.S.C. 15801).

8 (2) RESILIENCE.—The term “resilience” has
9 the meaning given such term in section 1304A of
10 the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007
11 (42 U.S.C. 17384a).

12 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Energy, acting
13 through the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Cyberse-
14 curity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response of the
15 Department of Energy, shall carry out a demonstration
16 program, to be known as the “Resilience Accelerator Dem-
17 onstration Program” (in this section referred to as the
18 “Program”), to make awards to National Laboratories for
19 projects that demonstrate innovative technologies to im-
20 prove electric grid resilience with respect to wildfires.

21 (c) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—The Secretary of Energy
22 may make an award under the Program to facilitate a
23 project that demonstrates an innovative technology to im-
24 prove electric grid resilience with respect to wildfires, in-
25 cluding—

1 (1) a project that demonstrates an innovative
2 technology for monitoring vegetation management;
3 and

4 (2) a project that demonstrates an innovative
5 technology to enhance the safety of first responders
6 who respond to electric grid emergencies.

7 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
8 authorized to be appropriated to carry out the Program
9 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2036.

10 **SEC. 22012. WILDFIRE DETECTION EQUIPMENT.**

11 To the extent practicable, the Secretary of Agri-
12 culture and the Secretary of the Interior shall each—

13 (1) expedite the placement of wildfire detection
14 equipment, such as sensors, cameras, and other rel-
15 evant equipment, in areas at risk of wildfire;

16 (2) expand the use of satellite data to improve
17 wildfire detection and response;

18 (3) use unmanned aerial vehicles to assess
19 wildland fires in their incipient stages to determine
20 the appropriate initial response actions;

21 (4) review procurement requirements for wild-
22 fire detection equipment within the context of mod-
23 ern and innovative technology; and

24 (5) annually provide a forum for companies en-
25 gaging in the development and testing of emergent

1 wildland fire technology to engage with wildland fire
2 managers.

3 **SEC. 22013. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT OF UNMANNED**
4 **AIRCRAFT SYSTEM FIRE APPLICATIONS.**

5 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

6 (1) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries”
7 means the Secretary of Agriculture and the Sec-
8 retary of the Interior.

9 (2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—the term
10 “unmanned aircraft system” means an unmanned
11 aircraft and associated elements (including, if appli-
12 cable, communication links and the components that
13 control the unmanned aircraft) that are required for
14 the operator to operate safely and efficiently.

15 (b) RESEARCH.—The Secretaries shall, acting
16 through the Joint Fire Science Program, work with uni-
17 versities and other research institutions to carry out re-
18 search and development on the wildfire response applica-
19 tions of unmanned aircraft systems.

20 (c) TESTING.—The Secretaries may coordinate with
21 the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration
22 to test an unmanned aircraft system developed under this
23 section at an unmanned aircraft test range in accordance
24 with section 44803 of title 49, United States Code.

1 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
2 are authorized to be appropriated to the Secretaries such
3 sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

4 **TITLE III—WILDFIRE SMOKE**
5 **AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

6 **SEC. 23001. NATIONAL SMOKE MONITORING AND ALERT**
7 **SYSTEM.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the Na-
9 tional Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, acting
10 through the Director of the National Weather Service, and
11 in conjunction with the Secretary of Agriculture acting
12 through the Chief of the Forest Service, the Secretary of
13 the Interior, the Administrator of the Environmental Pro-
14 tection Agency, and the Director of the Centers for Dis-
15 ease Control and Prevention shall establish a nationally
16 consistent smoke monitoring and alert system to provide
17 consistent, real-time information and forecasts on air
18 quality impacts from wildfire smoke, including wildfire
19 smoke in the built environment.

20 (b) INCREASE IN SMOKE SENSORS.—In carrying out
21 subsection (a), to ensure adequate and accessible data, the
22 Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
23 shall increase the availability and use of air monitoring
24 devices for wildfire smoke, including, to distinguish wild-

1 fire smoke from other forms of air pollution, increasing
2 the availability and use of—

3 (1) speciation monitors; and

4 (2) nonregulatory air monitors.

5 (c) USE OF SATELLITES.—In carrying out subsection
6 (a), the Administrator of the Environmental Protection
7 Agency shall explore the use of satellites.

8 (d) PUBLIC COUNTY-RESOLUTION SMOKE ALERT
9 SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND ROADWAYS SAFE-
10 TY.—In carrying out subsection (a), not later than 1 year
11 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Adminis-
12 trator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminis-
13 tration, acting through the Director of the National
14 Weather Service and in coordination with the Secretary
15 of Agriculture acting through the Chief of the Forest Serv-
16 ice, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Administrator
17 of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Director
18 of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shall
19 establish a public county-resolution smoke alert system for
20 public health and roadways safety which shall be based
21 on levels of particulate matter. The system established
22 under this subsection shall be in addition to the National
23 Weather Service Dense Smoke Advisories, which are based
24 on visibility.

1 (e) COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF AIR QUAL-
2 ITY AND SMOKE ALERT INFORMATION.—In carrying out
3 subsection (a), the Director of the National Weather Serv-
4 ice shall collect all air quality forecasts, including through
5 AirNow, public notifications, and alerts for smoke issued
6 by Federal, State, local, Tribal, and territorial air agencies
7 and disseminate them through weather forecast office net-
8 works to enable the Wireless Emergency Alerts System to
9 be extended to support smoke communications to protect
10 public health.

11 (f) FOREST SERVICE PERSONNEL AND SMOKE MONI-
12 TORING EQUIPMENT.—In carrying out subsection (a), not
13 later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this
14 Act, the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief
15 of the Forest Service, in coordination with the Secretary
16 of the Interior, shall expand the personnel and smoke
17 monitoring equipment of the Forest Service to increase the
18 capacity of the Forest Service to assess wildfire smoke,
19 including wildfire smoke in the built environment, and
20 carry out prescribed fires.

21 (g) INTERAGENCY WILDLAND FIRE AIR QUALITY
22 RESPONSE PROGRAM PERSONNEL AND SMOKE MONI-
23 TORING EQUIPMENT.—In carrying out subsection (a), not
24 later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this
25 Act, the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the

1 Interior shall expand the personnel (including air resource
2 advisors) of, and smoke monitoring equipment available
3 to, the Interagency Wildland Fire Air Quality Response
4 Program established under section 1114(f) of the John D.
5 Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation
6 Act (43 U.S.C. 1748b–1(f)).

7 (h) EXPANSION OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE CAPAC-
8 ITY.—

9 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out subsection
10 (a), the Administrator of the Environmental Protec-
11 tion Agency shall expand the emergency response ca-
12 pacity, including personnel and equipment, of the
13 Environmental Protection Agency—

14 (A) to measure air pollution from wildfires
15 that involve combustion of hazardous materials;
16 and

17 (B) to communicate information during
18 smoke events resulting from wildfires.

19 (2) DEFINITION.—In this subsection, the term
20 “hazardous materials” means explosive, flammable,
21 combustible, corrosive, oxidizing, toxic, infectious, or
22 radioactive materials that, when involved in an acci-
23 dent and released in sufficient quantities, put some
24 portion of the general public in immediate danger
25 from exposure, contact, inhalation, or ingestion.

1 (i) IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING SYSTEMS.—In car-
2 rying out subsection (a), in order to maintain the Environ-
3 mental Protection Agency AirNow framework and tech-
4 nology as a state-of-the-art, real-time resource for pro-
5 viding robust and actionable information to protect public
6 health from wildfire smoke, the Administrator of the Envi-
7 ronmental Protection Agency shall, as the Administrator
8 determines appropriate, improve and modernize such
9 AirNow framework and technology, including by making
10 improvements to and otherwise modernizing AirNow.gov,
11 AirNow-Tech, the AirNow Environmental Protection
12 Agency and Forest Service Fire and Smoke Map, AirNow
13 Forecast Submittal System, and the AirNow mobile app.

14 (j) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
15 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
16 \$32,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2036.

17 **SEC. 23002. HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT FOR WILDFIRE**
18 **SMOKE EXPOSURE.**

19 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the
20 date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the Na-
21 tional Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, in
22 consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental
23 Protection Agency, the Director of the Centers for Disease
24 Control and Prevention, the Administrator of the United
25 States Fire Administration, the Chief of the Forest Serv-

1 ice, and the Director of the Office of Wildland Fire, shall
2 complete a human health risk assessment for worker expo-
3 sure to wildfire smoke to estimate the nature and prob-
4 ability of adverse health effects in workers who may be
5 exposed to hazards from wildfire smoke, including wildfire
6 smoke in the built environment.

7 (b) REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSMENT.—The human
8 health risk assessment required under subsection (a) shall
9 address the following:

10 (1) The health problems for workers that may
11 be caused by exposure to wildfire smoke, including
12 wildfire smoke in the built environment.

13 (2) The probability that workers will experience
14 health problems when exposed to different con-
15 centrations of wildfire smoke, including wildfire
16 smoke in the built environment.

17 (3) The chemicals that workers are exposed to
18 from wildfire smoke, including wildfire smoke in the
19 built environment, as well as the overall level and
20 duration of such exposure.

21 (4) The differences in worker susceptibility to
22 health effects from exposure to wildfire smoke, in-
23 cluding wildfire smoke in the built environment.

24 (5) The effectiveness of mitigating both acute
25 and cumulative exposures to wildfire smoke, includ-

1 ing wildfire smoke in the built environment, in de-
2 creasing adverse health effects from such wildfire
3 smoke.

4 (c) BEST PRACTICES.—Not later than 6 months after
5 completing the human health risk assessment under sub-
6 section (a), the Director of the National Institute for Oc-
7 cupational Safety and Health shall develop and publish
8 best practices to mitigate worker exposure to wildfire
9 smoke, including wildfire smoke in the built environment.
10 Such best practices shall be informed by the human health
11 assessment completed under subsection (a).

12 (d) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
13 authorized to be appropriated to the Director of the Na-
14 tional Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to
15 carry out this section \$1,000,000 for each of fiscal years
16 2027 through 2036.

17 **DIVISION C—AGENCY MOD-**
18 **ERNIZATION AND FIRE-**
19 **FIGHTER SAFETY**
20 **TITLE I—WORKFORCE**
21 **DEVELOPMENT**

22 **SEC. 31001. MIDDLE FIRE LEADERS ACADEMY.**

23 (a) MIDDLE FIRE LEADERS ACADEMY.—Not later
24 than a 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act,
25 the Chief of the Forest Service, in coordination with Na-

1 tional Wildfire Coordinating Group, shall create a Middle
2 Fire Leaders Academy which shall be open to Federal and
3 non-Federal wildland fire response workforce employees.

4 The Middle Fire Leaders Academy shall provide—

5 (1) rapid training and certification for emerging
6 wildfire and beneficial fire leaders; and

7 (2) additional and expanded training of suffi-
8 cient quality to enable managers and decision mak-
9 ers responsible for addressing wildfire incidents and
10 prescribed burns to make informed decisions regard-
11 ing the beneficial application and management of
12 fire, including managing local fire regimes and other
13 forms of beneficial fire use.

14 (b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
15 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
16 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2036.

17 **SEC. 31002. WILDFIRE WORKFORCE GRANT PROGRAM.**

18 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

19 (1) ACCREDITED LOCAL ACADEMY.—The term
20 “accredited local academy” means a partnership, be-
21 tween a local fire suppression organization and the
22 office of the Fire Marshall of a State, that delivers
23 a State Fire Training program.

24 (2) ACCREDITED REGIONAL TRAINING PRO-
25 GRAM.—The term “accredited regional training pro-

1 gram” means a partnership, between an institution
2 of higher education and the office of the Fire Mar-
3 shall of a State, or the State Wildland Firefighting
4 Agency or in combination of Federal Land Manage-
5 ment Agencies, that delivers an approved State Fire
6 Training program within a given region.

7 (3) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
8 ty” means—

9 (A) an institution of higher education;

10 (B) an accredited regional training pro-
11 gram;

12 (C) an accredited local academy; or

13 (D) a nonprofit entity with experience ad-
14 ministering education and training programs
15 for fire service personnel.

16 (4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
17 term “institution of higher education” has the
18 meaning given such term in section 102 of the High-
19 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002).

20 (b) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—Not later than 6 months
21 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
22 Education shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to
23 eligible entities to carry out a program described in sub-
24 section (d).

1 (c) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
2 under this section, an eligible entity shall submit to the
3 Secretary an application in such manner, at such time,
4 and containing such information as the Secretary may re-
5 quire.

6 (d) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible entity that receives
7 a grant under this section shall carry out an educational
8 or vocational program that leads to a degree, certificate,
9 or recognized postsecondary credential (as defined in sec-
10 tion 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
11 (29 U.S.C. 3102)) in wildfire emergency management, in-
12 cluding—

13 (1) agricultural landscape planning relating to
14 wildfire resilience;

15 (2) natural resource management relating to
16 wildfire resilience;

17 (3) emergency management;

18 (4) emergency medical technician services;

19 (5) paramedic services;

20 (6) fire science;

21 (7) firefighting;

22 (8) community planning relating to wildfire re-
23 silience;

1 (9) short- and long-term post fire recovery safe-
2 ty and operations training for structural firefighters
3 assigned to wildfire incidents; or

4 (10) any other program that trains individuals
5 in the wildfire mitigation, response, or recovery
6 workforce.

7 (e) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is
8 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
9 \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2036.

10 **SEC. 31003. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS.**

11 Public Law 91–378 (16 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) is
12 amended by adding at the end the following:

13 **“TITLE III—CIVILIAN**
14 **CONSERVATION CENTERS**

15 **“SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.**

16 “In this title:

17 “(1) CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER.—The
18 term ‘Civilian Conservation Center’ means any resi-
19 dential workforce development or training facility for
20 underserved youth operated by the Department of
21 the Interior or the Department of Agriculture.

22 “(2) COVERED GRADUATE.—The term ‘covered
23 graduate’ means an individual who successfully com-
24 pleted a training program at a Civilian Conservation
25 Center.

1 “(3) COVERED STUDENT.—The term ‘covered
2 student’ means an individual who is enrolled in a
3 training program at a Civilian Conservation Center.

4 “(4) SECRETARIES.—The term ‘Secretaries’
5 means—

6 “(A) the Secretary of Agriculture; and

7 “(B) the Secretary of the Interior.

8 **“SEC. 302. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS WILDFIRE**
9 **AND CONSERVATION TRAINING PROGRAM.**

10 “(a) SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAMS.—The Sec-
11 retaries, in coordination with the Secretary of Labor, shall
12 offer at Civilian Conservation Centers specialized training
13 programs focused on—

14 “(1) forestry and rangeland management;

15 “(2) wildland firefighting; or

16 “(3) any other topic relating to the mission of
17 the Forest Service or the Department of the Interior
18 or the public interest.

19 “(b) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretaries shall
20 prioritize offering specialized training programs under
21 subsection (a) at facilities described in section 147(d) of
22 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
23 3197(d)).

1 **“SEC. 303. WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING WORKFORCE DEVEL-**
2 **OPMENT PILOT.**

3 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

4 “(1) EXPERIMENT, RESEARCH, OR DEMONSTRA-
5 TION PILOTS.—The Secretary of Agriculture, in co-
6 ordination with the Secretary of Labor, may carry
7 out experimental, research, or demonstration pilots
8 to provide career and technical education curricula
9 and course offerings to advance the missions of the
10 Department of Agriculture at Civilian Conservation
11 Centers operated by the Department of Agriculture,
12 including facilities described in section 147(d) of the
13 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
14 U.S.C. 3197(d)).

15 “(2) CURRICULA AND COURSES.—Curricula and
16 courses described in paragraph (1) include—

17 “(A) incident management and emergency
18 response logistics;

19 “(B) disaster response;

20 “(C) forest products measurement;

21 “(D) timber sale administration and prepa-
22 ration;

23 “(E) heavy equipment operation;

24 “(F) equipment and mechanical services;

25 “(G) industrial electrical;

26 “(H) machining;

1 “(I) mill operations;
2 “(J) forest restoration;
3 “(K) habitat and water quality monitoring;
4 “(L) watershed and habitat enhancement;
5 “(M) range management;
6 “(N) recreation access improvement;
7 “(O) volunteers and visitors enhancement;
8 and
9 “(P) historic preservation.

10 “(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out subsection
11 (a), the Secretary of Agriculture shall—

12 “(1) identify workforce needs in public land
13 agencies, forest, conservation, and recreation indus-
14 tries, and rural communities, after consulting with
15 State governments and agencies, Federal emergency
16 management and public land agencies, local commu-
17 nities, institutions of higher education, and Indian
18 Tribes;

19 “(2) develop marketing, recruitment, and reten-
20 tion materials for the curricula and courses offerings
21 provided under subsection (a);

22 “(3) provide specialized staff necessary to teach
23 curricula and courses offerings provided under sub-
24 section (a), to the extent practicable; and

1 “(4) improve Civilian Conservation Center fa-
2 cilities and modernize equipment used for the pur-
3 poses of career and technical education.

4 **“SEC. 304. WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING WORKFORCE EN-**
5 **HANCEMENT.**

6 “(a) RECRUITMENT GOALS AND INVESTMENTS.—

7 “(1) RECRUITMENT GOAL.—The Secretaries—

8 “(A) shall each set goals of—

9 “(i) hiring 300 covered graduates an-
10 nually to contribute to wildland firefighting
11 or other critical workforce needs within the
12 respective Department of each of the Sec-
13 retaries;

14 “(ii) a certain percentage of covered
15 graduates annually attaining employment
16 within the wildland firefighting, natural re-
17 sources, forestry, or a related field; and

18 “(iii) a certain percentage of covered
19 graduates annually attaining employment;
20 and

21 “(B) may make investments to support the
22 recruitment, training, hiring, and retention of
23 covered graduates.

24 “(2) SIGNING BONUS.—The Secretaries may
25 provide for a signing bonus to enable the successful

1 employment and transition of covered graduates, in-
2 cluding for the purpose of securing housing in rural
3 and remote communities.

4 “(b) DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.—For fiscal year
5 2027, and each fiscal year thereafter through 2036, the
6 Secretaries may appoint, without regard to the provisions
7 of subchapter I of chapter 33 of title 5, United States
8 Code, other than sections 3303 and 3328 of that title, a
9 covered graduate directly to a position for which the cov-
10 ered graduate meets Office of Personnel Management
11 qualification standards.

12 “(c) PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT.—The Secretaries
13 shall ensure that appropriate career pathways are devel-
14 oped for covered graduates of relevant Civilian Conserva-
15 tion Center training programs.

16 “(d) DISADVANTAGED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT.—Not-
17 withstanding any other provision of law, the Secretaries
18 may employ covered students at regular rates of pay for
19 necessary hours of work.

20 “(e) USE OF COVERED STUDENTS FOR CONTRACTS,
21 AGREEMENTS, AND GRANTS.—To the maximum extent
22 practicable, the Secretary of Agriculture shall encourage
23 the use of covered students to fulfill obligations under con-
24 tracts, agreements, and grants relevant to the training ad-
25 ministered by the Forest Service at a unit of the National

1 Forest System where a Civilian Conservation Center is lo-
2 cated.

3 **“SEC. 305. WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING HOUSING PILOT PRO-**
4 **GRAM.**

5 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall establish
6 a pilot program to employ covered students to improve and
7 expand the housing stock owned by the Federal Govern-
8 ment for the purpose of housing wildland firefighters, vol-
9 unteers, partner crewmembers, interns, and other agency
10 employees.

11 “(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot pro-
12 gram under subsection (a), the Secretaries shall—

13 “(1) identify properties currently owned by the
14 Federal Government that would be appropriate
15 housing for wildland firefighters, volunteers, partner
16 crewmembers, interns, and other agency employees;

17 “(2) identify areas where the construction of
18 new housing described in paragraph (1) would be
19 appropriate and sustainable; and

20 “(3) submit to Congress a prioritized list of
21 projects for renovation with a plan for how the Sec-
22 retaries will employ covered students to repair, ren-
23 ovate, and remediate the properties identified under
24 paragraph (1).

1 **“SEC. 306. REPORT.**

2 “Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
3 of this title, the Secretaries shall submit to the Committee
4 on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and
5 the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representa-
6 tives a report—

7 “(1) describing underutilized capacity at Civil-
8 ian Conservation Centers, based on an assessment
9 conducted by the Secretaries; and

10 “(2) identifying the investments, improvements,
11 and efficiencies necessary to utilize the full capacity
12 of Civilian Conservation Centers.”.

13 **SEC. 31004. PILOT PROGRAM TO EMPLOY VETERANS IN PO-**
14 **SITIONS RELATING TO FEDERAL WILDLAND**
15 **FIREFIGHTING ACTIVITIES.**

16 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-
18 TEES.—The term “appropriate congressional com-
19 mittees” means the following:

20 (A) The Committee on Agriculture of the
21 House of Representatives.

22 (B) The Committee on Natural Resources
23 of the House of Representatives.

24 (C) The Committee on Veterans’ Affairs of
25 the House of Representatives.

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

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

5 (F) The Committee on Veterans' Affairs of
6 the Senate.

7 (2) EMPLOYEE.—The term “employee” has the
8 meaning given such term in section 2105 of title 5,
9 United States Code.

10 (3) WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING ACTIVITIES.—
11 The term “wildland firefighting activities” means
12 any temporary, seasonal, or permanent position at
13 the Department of Agriculture or the Department of
14 the Interior, and Tribal Firefighters, that maintains
15 group, emergency incident management, or fire
16 qualifications, as established annually by the Stand-
17 ards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications pub-
18 lished by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group,
19 that primarily engages in or supports wildland fire
20 management, including forestry and rangeland tech-
21 nicians and positions concerning aviation, engineer-
22 ing heavy equipment operations, dispatch, or fire
23 and fuels management.

24 (b) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of Veterans
25 Affairs, in coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture

1 and the Secretary of the Interior, shall jointly establish
2 a pilot program to employ veterans in wildland firefighting
3 activities.

4 (c) DUTIES.—The duties of such Secretaries with re-
5 spect to such pilot program are as follows:

6 (1) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall be
7 responsible for administering such pilot program.

8 (2) The Secretary of Agriculture and the Sec-
9 retary of the Interior shall be responsible for—

10 (A) identifying vacant positions in the De-
11 partment of Agriculture and the Department of
12 the Interior, respectively, that are appropriate
13 for veterans selected for participation in such
14 pilot program; and

15 (B) to the extent practicable, employing
16 such veterans in such positions.

17 (d) APPLICATION OF CIVIL SERVICE LAWS.—A vet-
18 eran employed under the pilot program under subsection
19 (b) shall be treated as an employee of the Department of
20 Agriculture or the Department of the Interior, as the case
21 may be.

22 (e) BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary of Veterans
23 Affairs shall establish guidelines that include best prac-
24 tices for departments and agencies of the Federal Govern-
25 ment that carry out programs to employ veterans who are

1 transitioning from service in the Armed Forces. Such
2 guidelines shall include—

3 (1) lessons learned under the Warrior Training
4 Advancement Course of the Department of Veterans
5 Affairs; and

6 (2) methods to realize cost savings based on
7 such lessons.

8 (f) REPORTS.—

9 (1) INITIAL REPORT.—Not later than 60 days
10 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
11 retary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Agri-
12 culture, and the Secretary of the Interior, shall
13 jointly submit to the appropriate congressional com-
14 mittees a report on the pilot program under sub-
15 section (b), including—

16 (A) a description of how such pilot pro-
17 gram will be carried out in a manner to reduce
18 the unemployment of veterans; and

19 (B) any recommendations for legislative
20 actions to improve such pilot program.

21 (2) IMPLEMENTATION.—Not later than 1 year
22 after the date on which the Secretary of Veterans
23 Affairs commences such pilot program, the Secretary
24 of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Agriculture,
25 and the Secretary of the Interior, shall jointly sub-

1 mit to the appropriate congressional committees a
2 report on the implementation of such pilot program.

3 (3) FINAL REPORT.—Not later than 30 days
4 after the date on which such pilot program con-
5 cludes, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Sec-
6 retary of Agriculture, and the Secretary of the Inte-
7 rior, shall jointly submit to the appropriate congres-
8 sional committees a report that includes—

9 (A) an identification of—

10 (i) the number of veterans who ap-
11 plied to participate in such pilot program;

12 (ii) the number of such veterans em-
13 ployed pursuant to such pilot program; and

14 (iii) the number of veterans described
15 in clause (ii) who transitioned to full-time
16 positions with the Federal Government
17 after participating in such pilot program;
18 and

19 (B) any other information the Secretaries
20 determine appropriate with respect to meas-
21 uring the effectiveness of such pilot program.

22 (g) TERMINATION DATE.—The authority to carry out
23 the pilot program under subsection (b) shall terminate on
24 the date that is 2 years after the date on which the Sec-
25 retary of Veterans Affairs commences such pilot program.

1 **TITLE II—STAFF SAFETY AND**
2 **SUPPORT**

3 **Subtitle A— Tim Hart Wildland**
4 **Firefighter Support**

5 **SEC. 32101. SPECIAL LIMITATIONS ON PAY FOR WILDLAND**
6 **FIREFIGHTERS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—Title 5, United States Code, is
8 amended—

9 (1) by inserting after section 5547 the fol-
10 lowing:

11 **“§ 5547a. Special limitations on premium pay for em-**
12 **ployees engaged in wildland firefighting**

13 “(a) In this section—

14 “(1) the term ‘covered employee’ means an em-
15 ployee of the Forest Service or the Department of
16 the Interior who—

17 “(A) qualifies as a wildland firefighter
18 based on the definitions of ‘firefighter’ and
19 ‘wildland firefighter’ in section 5332a(a); or

20 “(B) is certified by the applicable agency
21 to perform wildland fire incident related duties
22 during the period such employee is assigned to
23 a qualifying incident;

24 “(2) the term ‘covered services’ means services
25 performed by an employee that are determined by

1 the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Ag-
2 riculture, as applicable, to primarily involve emer-
3 gency wildfire suppression activities, including any
4 periods of duty when the employee is sleeping or
5 resting during an extended period of deployment to
6 engage in those activities;

7 “(3) the term ‘emergency wildland fire suppres-
8 sion activities’ means initial-response and extended-
9 response activities that directly relate to suppression
10 of a wildfire, including activities associated with a
11 severity incident but excluding activities associated
12 with a prescribed fire incident (as those terms are
13 defined section 5545c); and

14 “(4) the term ‘premium pay’ means the pre-
15 mium pay paid under the provisions of law cited in
16 section 5547(a), except as otherwise provided in sub-
17 section (h).

18 “(b) Any premium pay earned by a covered employee
19 for covered services shall be disregarded in calculating the
20 aggregate of such employee’s basic pay and premium pay
21 for purposes of applying a limitation under section 5547.

22 “(c) Any premium pay that is disregarded under sub-
23 section (b) shall be disregarded in calculating such em-
24 ployee’s aggregate pay for purposes of applying the limita-
25 tion in section 5307.

1 “(d) Pay that is disregarded under subsection (b)
2 may not be paid to the extent it would cause the aggregate
3 of the employee’s basic pay, premium pay, and hazard pay
4 under section 5545(d) payable in the applicable calendar
5 year to exceed the rate of basic pay payable for a position
6 at level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5313,
7 as in effect at the end of such calendar year. Any premium
8 pay that is subject to a biweekly limitation under section
9 5547(c) must be paid first before other premium pay in
10 applying the level II limitation.

11 “(e) Application of the limit in subsection (d) or sub-
12 section (h) to a covered employee may be waived at the
13 sole and exclusive discretion of the Secretary of the Inte-
14 rior or the Secretary of Agriculture, as applicable. Before
15 authorizing such a waiver for employees of their respective
16 agencies, each Secretary, after consulting with the other
17 Secretary, shall prescribe criteria that will be applied in
18 making a determination to grant a waiver.

19 “(f) Any additional pay resulting from application of
20 this section may not be used in computing a lump-sum
21 payment for accumulated and accrued annual leave under
22 section 5551 or section 5552.

23 “(g) The Departments of the Interior and Agri-
24 culture shall maintain records that document uses of the
25 authority provided by this section.

1 “(h)(1) For prevailing rate employees described in
2 section 5342(a)(2)(A) who meet the requirements in sub-
3 section (a)(l) to qualify as a covered employee, premium
4 pay may not be paid to the extent it would cause the ag-
5 gregate of the employee’s basic pay and premium pay in
6 the applicable calendar year to exceed the rate of basic
7 pay payable for a position at level II of the Executive
8 Schedule under section 5313, as in effect at the end of
9 such calendar year.

10 “(2) For the purposes of this subsection, the term
11 ‘basic pay’ means wages, environmental differential pay,
12 and night shift differential pay, and the term ‘premium
13 pay’ means overtime pay, Sunday premium pay, and holi-
14 day premium pay.”; and

15 (2) in section 5541(2)(xi), by inserting “, sec-
16 tion 5547a(h),” after “section 5544”.

17 (b) CALENDAR YEAR 2026.—For the purpose of ap-
18 plying section 5547 and section 1701 of division B of Pub-
19 lic Law 117–43 (5 U.S.C. 5547 note) in calendar year
20 2026, incident standby premium pay shall be included in
21 premium pay that is subject to the limits established in
22 those sections.

23 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
24 subsection (a) shall take effect on the first day of the first
25 pay period that has a payment date in January 2027. Sub-

1 section (b) shall be effective on the first day of the first
2 applicable pay period beginning on or after October 1,
3 2026.

4 (d) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
5 for chapter 55 of title 5, United States Code, is further
6 amended by inserting after the item for section 5547 the
7 following new item:

“5547a. Special limitations on premium pay for employees engaged in wildland
firefighting.”.

8 **SEC. 32102. REST AND RECUPERATION LEAVE FOR EM-**
9 **PLOYEES ENGAGED IN WILDLAND FIRE-**
10 **FIGHTING.**

11 Title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting
12 after section 6329d the following:

13 **“§ 6329e. Rest and recuperation leave for employees**
14 **engaged in wildland firefighting**

15 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

16 “(1) APPLICABLE SECRETARY.—The term ‘ap-
17 plicable Secretary’ means the Secretary of Agri-
18 culture or the Secretary of the Interior.

19 “(2) COVERED EMPLOYEE.—The term ‘covered
20 employee’ means an employee of the Forest Service
21 or the Department of the Interior who—

22 “(A) qualifies as a ‘wildland firefighter’
23 based on the definitions of ‘firefighter’ and
24 ‘wildland firefighter’ in section 5332a(a) (apply-

1 ing the definition of ‘employee’ in section
2 6301(2) in lieu of the definition of ‘employee’ in
3 section 5331(a)); or

4 “(B) is certified by the applicable agency
5 to perform wildland fire incident related duties
6 during the period such employee is assigned to
7 a qualifying incident.

8 “(3) QUALIFYING INCIDENT.—The term ‘quali-
9 fying incident’ has the meaning given that term in
10 section 5545c(a)(5).

11 “(b) REST AND RECUPERATION.—A covered em-
12 ployee may receive paid rest and recuperation leave fol-
13 lowing the completion of service under a qualifying inci-
14 dent, subject to policies established at the sole and exclu-
15 sive discretion of the Secretary of the Agriculture or the
16 Secretary of the Interior, as applicable. Each Secretary
17 shall prescribe such policies after consulting with the other
18 Secretary.

19 “(c) APPLICATION.—Rest and recuperation leave
20 granted under this section shall be used during scheduled
21 hours within the covered employee’s tour of duty estab-
22 lished for leave-charging purposes and shall be paid in the
23 same manner as annual leave. Rest and recuperation leave
24 must be used immediately after a qualifying incident and
25 may not be set aside for later use. A covered employee

1 may not receive any payment for unused rest and recuper-
2 ation leave.

3 “(d) INTERMITTENT WORK SCHEDULES.—A covered
4 employee with an intermittent work schedule shall be ex-
5 cused from duty during the same period of time that other
6 covered employees in the same circumstances are entitled
7 to rest and recuperation leave and shall receive a payment
8 as if the covered employee with an intermittent work
9 schedule were entitled to rest and recuperation leave under
10 subsections (b) and (c).”.

11 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
12 subsection (a) shall be effective on the first day of the
13 first applicable pay period beginning on or after October
14 1, 2026.

15 (c) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections
16 for subchapter II of chapter 63 of title 5, United States
17 Code, is amended by inserting after the item relating to
18 section 6329d the following new item:

“6329e. Rest and recuperation leave for employees engaged in wildland fire-
fighting.”.

19 **SEC. 32103. HEALTH PROVISIONS.**

20 (a) DATABASE; RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than
21 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secre-
22 taries shall—

23 (1) establish and maintain a publicly accessible,
24 searchable database on a website, to be called the

1 “Federal Wildland Firefighter Cancer and Cardio-
2 vascular Disease Database”, to track chronic disease
3 caused by on-the-job environmental exposure over
4 the lifetimes of current and former Federal wildland
5 firefighters;

6 (2) update such database not less than on a
7 yearly basis; and

8 (3) develop and adhere to recommendations on
9 mitigation strategies to minimize exposure to envi-
10 ronmental hazards for Federal wildland firefighters.

11 (b) MENTAL HEALTH.—

12 (1) MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM.—Not later
13 than January 1, 2027, the Secretaries shall establish
14 and carry out a program for Federal wildland fire-
15 fighters for mental health awareness and support.
16 Such program shall include the following:

17 (A) A mental health awareness campaign.

18 (B) A mental health education and train-
19 ing program that includes an on-boarding cur-
20 riculum.

21 (C) An extensive peer-to-peer mental
22 health support network for Federal wildland
23 firefighters and their immediate family.

24 (D) Expansion of the Critical Incident
25 Stress Management Program, to develop and

1 retain a larger pool of qualified mental health
2 professionals who are familiar with the experi-
3 ences of the emergency response workforce. The
4 Program shall monitor and track mental health
5 in the profession to better understand the scope
6 of the issue and provide ongoing assistance and
7 professional long-term care to patients.

8 (E) Establish and carry out a new and dis-
9 tinct mental health support service specific to
10 Federal wildland firefighters and their imme-
11 diate family, with culturally relevant and trau-
12 ma informed mental health professionals who
13 are readily available, and not subject to any
14 limit on the number of sessions or service pro-
15 vided.

16 (2) MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE.—Each Federal
17 wildland firefighter shall be entitled to 7 consecutive
18 days of leave, without loss or reduction in pay, dur-
19 ing any calendar year. Leave provided under this
20 paragraph shall not—

21 (A) accumulate for use in succeeding
22 years; and

23 (B) be considered to be annual or vacation
24 leave for purposes of section 5551 or 5552 of

1 title 5, United States Code, or for any other
2 purpose.

3 (c) COORDINATION.—In carrying out subsections (a)
4 and (b), the Secretaries may enter into partnerships or
5 cooperative agreements with other Federal agencies, uni-
6 versities, or non-profit institutions.

7 (d) OWCP.—The Office of Workers' Compensation
8 Programs within the Department of Labor shall—

9 (1) recognize post-traumatic stress disorder and
10 psychological stress-related injuries or illnesses cor-
11 related to fire protection, suppression, and incident
12 support activities, and ensure long-term coverage for
13 the duration of the illnesses; and

14 (2) expand the Special Claims Unit to ensure
15 adequate unit staffing levels are sufficient to expe-
16 dite the claims process and shorten response times
17 to wildland firefighter and incident support per-
18 sonnel injured or effected on the job in order to al-
19 leviate the psychological and financial burdens
20 placed on the patient and their families.

21 **SEC. 32104. RETIREMENT FOR FIREFIGHTERS.**

22 (a) DEPOSIT SERVICE.—Notwithstanding any other
23 provision of law, any service performed by an individual
24 as a Federal wildland firefighter on or after January 1,
25 1989, for which retirement deductions under chapter 84

1 of title 5, United States Code, have not been made shall
2 be creditable under such chapter, but only if such fire-
3 fighter—

4 (1) submits a written election to the Director;

5 and

6 (2) the deposit requirements of section 8411(f)
7 of such title had been met with respect to such serv-
8 ice.

9 (b) DISABILITY ANNUITY.—Beginning on the date of
10 enactment of this Act, any Federal wildland firefighter
11 who suffers from a disease described in section
12 8143b(b)(2) of title 5, United States Code, due to environ-
13 mental job-related exposure, including smoke inhalation,
14 silicate inhalation, and firefighting toxic exposure, shall be
15 considered to be disabled for purposes of section 8451 of
16 such title. Such section 8451 shall be applied to any such
17 firefighter by substituting “12 months” for “18 months”.

18 (c) INCLUDING OVERTIME AS BASIC PAY.—Section
19 8331(3) of title 5, United States Code, is amended—

20 (1) in subparagraph (H), by striking “and” at
21 the end;

22 (2) in subparagraph (I), by inserting “and”
23 after the semicolon;

24 (3) by inserting after subparagraph (I) the fol-
25 lowing:

1 “(J) with respect to a Federal wildland
2 firefighter (as that term is defined in section
3 5332a(a)), overtime pay received on or after the
4 date of enactment of this subparagraph;” and
5 (4) in the undesignated matter following sub-
6 paragraph (J) (as added by paragraph (3)), by strik-
7 ing “subparagraphs (B) through (I) of this para-
8 graph” and inserting “subparagraphs (B) through
9 (J) of this paragraph,”.

(d) SEPARATE NORMAL-COST PERCENTAGE.—Section 8423(a)(1)(B)(i) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting after “firefighters,” the following: “Federal wildland firefighter (as that term is defined in section 5332a(a)),”.

15 SEC. 32105. PAY PARITY FOR FEDERAL STRUCTURAL FIRE-
16 FIGHTERS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, any pay, benefits, and bonuses provided to any Federal structural firefighter shall be comparable with the pay, benefits, and bonuses provided for Federal wildland firefighters under this subtitle, the amendments made by this subtitle, and section 5332a of title 5, United States Code. Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director shall submit a report to Congress on whether pay for such Fed-

1 eral structural firefighters is competitive with Federal
2 wildland firefighters.

3 (b) FEDERAL STRUCTURAL FIREFIGHTER DE-
4 FINED.—In this section, the term “Federal structural fire-
5 fighter”—

6 (1) has the meaning given the term “fire-
7 fighter” in section 8401 of chapter 84 of title 5,
8 United States Code; and

9 (2) does not include any Federal wildland fire-
10 fighter.

11 **SEC. 32106. PAY ADJUSTMENTS AND OTHER MATTERS.**

12 (a) ANNUAL ADJUSTMENTS.—Notwithstanding any
13 other provision of law, beginning in the first pay period
14 beginning on or after the date that is 1 year after the
15 date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter,
16 the basic rate of pay for each Federal wildland firefighter
17 occupying a position within such pay scale shall be in-
18 creased by not less than the percentage equal to the per-
19 cent change in the Consumer Price Index (all items—
20 United States city average), published monthly by the Bu-
21 reau of Labor Statistics, for December of the preceding
22 year over such Consumer Price Index for the December
23 of the year prior to the preceding year, adjusted to the
24 nearest one-tenth of 1 percent.

1 (b) COMPENSATION COMPARABLE TO NON-FEDERAL
2 FIREFIGHTERS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of
3 the enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall submit a
4 report to Congress on whether pay, benefits, and bonuses
5 provided to Federal wildland firefighters are comparable
6 to the pay, benefits, and bonuses provided for non-Federal
7 firefighters in the State or locality where Federal wildland
8 firefighters are based.

9 (c) HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY.—Each Federal wildland
10 firefighter carrying out work completed during prescribed
11 fire, parachuting, tree climbing over 20 feet, hazard tree
12 removal, and other hazardous work as identified by the
13 Secretaries, shall be entitled to be paid the appropriate
14 differential under section 5545(d) of title 5, United States
15 Code, as if such employee was covered by such section.
16 The Director may prescribe regulations to carry out this
17 subsection.

18 (d) OTHER MATTERS.—

19 (1) RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION BONUS.—
20 In order to promote the recruitment and retention of
21 Federal wildland firefighters, the Director, in coordi-
22 nation with the Secretaries, shall establish a pro-
23 gram under which a recruitment or retention bonus
24 of not less than \$1,000 may be paid to a Federal
25 wildland firefighter in an amount as determined ap-

1 appropriate by the Director and the Secretaries. The
2 minimum amount of such bonus in the previous sen-
3 tence shall be increased each year by the Consumer
4 Price Index in the manner prescribed under sub-
5 section (a). Any bonus under this subsection—

6 (A) shall be paid to any primary or sec-
7 ondary Federal wildland firefighter upon the
8 date that such firefighter successfully completes
9 a work capacity test; and

10 (B) may not be paid to any such fire-
11 fighter more than once per calendar year.

12 (2) HOUSING ALLOWANCE.—The Secretaries
13 shall provide a housing allowance to any Federal
14 wildland firefighter deployed to a location more than
15 50 miles from their primary residence. Such allow-
16 ance shall be in an amount determined appropriate
17 by the Secretaries and adjusted based on the cost of
18 housing in the area of deployment.

19 (3) CAREER TRANSITION.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
21 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
22 retaries shall establish, maintain, coordinate,
23 and operate a voluntary tuition assistance pro-
24 gram for Federal wildland firefighters occu-
25 pying a permanent position that encompass a

1 broad range of educational experiences (either
2 in-person or through distance-learning), includ-
3 ing academic skills development, vocational pro-
4 grams, career and technical programs, and pro-
5 grams leading to the award of undergraduate
6 and graduate degrees.

7 (B) AMOUNT.—The program under sub-
8 paragraph (A) shall provide, not more than
9 once during each calendar year, a payment of
10 not less than \$4,000 to each Federal wildland
11 firefighter who elects to participate in the pro-
12 gram.

13 (C) REVIEW.—The Secretaries shall con-
14 duct an annual review of whether the amount
15 provided under subparagraph (B) is adequate,
16 in consideration of inflation and other effects.

17 **SEC. 32107. WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT CASUALTY AS-**
18 **SISTANCE PROGRAM.**

19 (a) DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM.—Not later than 6
20 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the
21 Secretary of the Interior shall develop a Wildland Fire
22 Management Casualty Assistance Program (referred to in
23 this section as the “Program”) to provide assistance to
24 the next-of-kin of—

1 (1) firefighters who, while in the line of duty,
2 suffer illness or are critically injured or killed; and

3 (2) wildland fire support personnel critically in-
4 jured or killed in the line of duty.

5 (b) ASPECTS OF PROGRAM.—The Program shall ad-
6 dress the following:

7 (1) The initial and any subsequent notifications
8 to the next-of-kin of a firefighter or wildland fire
9 support personnel who—

10 (A) is killed in the line of duty; or

11 (B) requires hospitalization or treatment
12 at a medical facility due to a line-of-duty injury
13 or illness.

14 (2) The reimbursement of next-of-kin for ex-
15 penses associated with travel to visit a firefighter or
16 wildland fire support personnel who—

17 (A) is killed in the line of duty; or

18 (B) requires hospitalization or treatment
19 at a medical facility due to a line-of-duty injury
20 or illness.

21 (3) The qualifications, assignment, training, du-
22 ties, supervision, and accountability for the perform-
23 ance of casualty assistance responsibilities.

24 (4) The relief or transfer of casualty assistance
25 officers, including notification to survivors of critical

1 injury or illness in the line of duty and next-of-kin
2 of the reassignment of such officers to other duties.

3 (5) Centralized, short-term and long-term case
4 management procedures for casualty assistance, in-
5 cluding rapid access by survivors of firefighters or
6 wildland fire support personnel and casualty assist-
7 ance officers to expert case managers and coun-
8 selors.

9 (6) The provision, through a computer acces-
10 sible website and other means and at no cost to sur-
11 vivors and next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire
12 support personnel, of personalized, integrated infor-
13 mation on the benefits and financial assistance avail-
14 able to such survivors from the Federal Government.

15 (7) The provision of information to survivors
16 and next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire sup-
17 port personnel on mechanisms for registering com-
18 plaints about, or requests for, additional assistance
19 related to casualty assistance.

20 (8) Liaison with the Department of the Inte-
21 rior, the Department of Justice, and the Social Se-
22 curity Administration to ensure prompt and accurate
23 resolution of issues relating to benefits administered
24 by those agencies for survivors of firefighters or
25 wildland fire support personnel.

1 (9) Data collection, in consultation with the
2 United States Fire Administration and the National
3 Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, re-
4 garding the incidence and quality of casualty assist-
5 ance provided to survivors of firefighters or wildland
6 fire support personnel.

7 (c) LINE OF DUTY DEATH BENEFITS.—The Pro-
8 gram shall not affect existing authorities for Line of Duty
9 Death benefits for Federal firefighters and wildland fire
10 support personnel.

11 (d) NEXT-OF-KIN DEFINED.—In this section, the
12 term “next-of-kin” means person or persons in the highest
13 category of priority as determined by the following list
14 (categories appear in descending order of priority):

15 (1) Surviving legal spouse.

16 (2) Children (whether by current or prior mar-
17 riage) age 18 years or older in descending prece-
18 dence by age.

19 (3) Father or mother, unless by court order
20 custody has been vested in another (adoptive parent
21 takes precedence over natural parent).

22 (4) Siblings (whole or half) age 18 years or
23 older in descending precedence by age.

24 (5) Grandfather or grandmother.

1 (6) Any other relative (precedence to be deter-
2 mined in accordance with the civil law of descent of
3 the deceased former member's State of domicile at
4 time of death).

5 **SEC. 32108. CONTINUING ACCRUAL OF SERVICE FOR FIRE-**
6 **FIGHTERS.**

7 (a) FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM.—
8 Section 8401(14) of title 5, United States Code, is amend-
9 ed to read as follows:

10 “(14) the term ‘firefighter’ means—

11 “(A) an employee, the duties of whose po-
12 sition—

13 “(i) are primarily to perform work di-
14 rectly connected with the control and extin-
15 guishment of non-wildland fires; and

16 “(ii) are sufficiently rigorous that em-
17 ployment opportunities should be limited to
18 young and physically vigorous individuals,
19 as determined by the Director considering
20 the recommendations of the employing
21 agency;

22 “(B) an employee, the duties of whose po-
23 sition—

1 “(i) are primarily to perform work di-
2 rectly connected with the control and extin-
3 guishment of wildland fires; and

4 “(ii) are sufficiently rigorous that em-
5 ployment opportunities should be limited to
6 young and physically vigorous individuals,
7 as determined by the Director considering
8 the recommendations of the employing
9 agency;

10 “(C) an employee who—

11 “(i) is transferred directly to a super-
12 visory or administrative position after per-
13 forming duties described in subparagraph
14 (A) for at least 3 years; and

15 “(ii) while serving in such supervisory
16 or administrative position, has no break in
17 service; or

18 “(D) an employee who—

19 “(i) occupies a supervisory or admin-
20 istrative position after performing duties
21 described in subparagraph (B) for not less
22 than 3 years; and

23 “(ii) has not more than 24 months in
24 total time of breaks in service;”.

25 (b) SERVICE BEFORE DATE OF ENACTMENT.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the requirements
2 under paragraph (2), service performed before the
3 date of enactment of this Act by an individual who,
4 on the date of enactment of this Act, is an employee
5 (as defined in section 8401(11) of title 5, United
6 States Code) shall, for the purposes of chapter 84 of
7 title 5, United States Code, be treated as service
8 performed by a firefighter if—

9 (A) such service was performed during the
10 period beginning on October 1, 2003, and end-
11 ing on the day before the date of enactment of
12 this Act;

13 (B) at the time of performing such serv-
14 ice—

15 (i) the individual did not meet the re-
16 quirements to be a firefighter under sec-
17 tion 8401(14) of title 5, United States
18 Code, because of a break in service; and

19 (ii) would have met the requirements
20 to be a firefighter under section
21 8401(14)(D) of title 5, United States
22 Code, as amended by this Act; and

23 (C) appropriate deductions and
24 withholdings under sections 8422 and 8423 of

1 title 5, United States Code, were made during
2 such service.

3 (2) CREDIT FOR SERVICE.—To receive credit
4 for eligible service under paragraph (1), the applica-
5 ble individual shall—

6 (A) before the date on which the individual
7 separates from service in the agency in which
8 the individual holds a position on the date of
9 enactment of this Act, submit a written election
10 to the agency employing the individual;

11 (B) if the individual is not employed by the
12 agency that employed the individual when the
13 service described in paragraph (1) was per-
14 formed, submit a written election to such agen-
15 cy; and

16 (C) remit to the agency that employed the
17 individual when such service was performed the
18 additional amount that would have been de-
19 ducted during the period of prior service under
20 section 8422 of title 5, United States Code,
21 from the pay of the individual if the amend-
22 ments made by subsection (a) had been in ef-
23 fect during the prior service, plus any applicable
24 interest computed under section 8334 of title
25 5, United States Code.

1 (3) GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS.—If an indi-
2 vidual remits payment under paragraph (2)(C) with
3 respect to service described in paragraph (1), the
4 agency that employed the individual when such serv-
5 ice was performed shall remit to the Office of Per-
6 sonnel Management (for deposit in the Treasury of
7 the United States to the credit of the Civil Service
8 Retirement and Disability Fund) the total additional
9 amount of Federal contributions that would have
10 been paid under section 8423 of title 5, United
11 States Code, if the amendments made by subsection
12 (a) had been in effect during the prior service, plus
13 any applicable interest computed in accordance with
14 section 8334e of title 5, United States Code.

15 (4) NOTIFICATION AND ASSISTANCE REQUIRE-
16 MENTS.—The Director of the Office of Personnel
17 Management shall—

18 (A) take such action as may be necessary
19 and appropriate to inform individuals entitled
20 to have any service credited under this sub-
21 section, or to have any annuity computed under
22 this subsection, of the entitlement to the credit
23 or computation; and

24 (B) upon request, assist any individual de-
25 scribed in subparagraph (A) in obtaining such

1 information in the possession of the Secretary
2 of Agriculture or the Secretary of the Interior,
3 as applicable, as may be necessary to verify the
4 entitlement of the individual to have any service
5 credited, or to have any annuity computed, pur-
6 suant to this subsection.

7 (5) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
8 section shall be construed to permit or require the
9 making of any contribution to the Thrift Savings
10 Fund that would not otherwise have been permitted
11 or required but for the enactment of this section.

12 (c) RETENTION OF ENHANCED RETIREMENT BENE-
13 FITS DURING PERIOD OF NON-FEDERAL SERVICE.—Sec-
14 tion 104(e)(2) of the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
15 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5323(e)) is amended by
16 adding at the end the following: “Any Federal wildland
17 firefighter who retains coverage, rights, and benefits under
18 such chapter 83 or 84 pursuant to this paragraph shall
19 retain enhanced retirement benefits under either such
20 chapter.”.

21 (d) JOB-SHARING.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
22 sion of law, a Federal wildland firefighter or wildland fire
23 support personnel may occupy a position in the civil serv-
24 ice (as that term is defined in section 2101 of title 5,
25 United States Code) and a position with a Tribal Govern-

1 ment under a job-share agreement even if the position
2 with a Tribal Government is classified at a level higher
3 than the civil service position, including any level that is
4 above that of the highest level applicable to the General
5 Schedule.

6 **Subtitle B—Federal Workforce**
7 **Stability**

8 **SEC. 32201. PROHIBITION ON REDUCTIONS IN FORCE AND**
9 **INVOLUNTARY SEPARATIONS AT DEPART-**
10 **MENT OF THE INTERIOR AND UNITED STATES**
11 **FOREST SERVICE.**

12 (a) PROHIBITION.—During the period beginning on
13 the date of the enactment of this Act and ending on Sep-
14 tember 30, 2030, without prior notification and approval
15 of the chairs and ranking members of the Committees on
16 Appropriations of the House of Representatives and the
17 Senate, no Federal funds may be obligated or expended
18 to—

19 (1) initiate, implement, or otherwise carry out
20 a reduction in force within the Department of the
21 Interior or the United States Forest Service; or

22 (2) carry out an involuntary separation of any
23 employee in the competitive service, any career em-
24 ployee in the excepted service, or any career ap-
25 pointee in the Senior Executive Service at the De-

1 partment of Interior or the United States Forest
2 Service except for cause on charges of misconduct,
3 delinquency, or performance.

4 (b) DEFINITIONS.—In subsection (a), the terms
5 “competitive service”, “excepted service”, and “career ap-
6 pointee” have the meaning given those terms in sections
7 2102, 2103, and 3132(a), respectively, of title 5, United
8 States Code.

9 **SEC. 32202. PROHIBITION ON CLOSURE OF FOREST SERV-**
10 **ICE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT FACILI-**
11 **TIES.**

12 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Sec-
13 retary of Agriculture may not close any research and de-
14 velopment facility of the Forest Service, including by inde-
15 pendent action of the Secretary or any level of agency re-
16 organization, without prior notification and approval of
17 the chairs and ranking members of the Committees on Ap-
18 propriations in the House of Representatives and the Sen-
19 ate.