

WILDFIRE RESPONSE AND READINESS ACT

Wildfires are burning hotter, spreading faster, and reaching closer to home than ever before. Trump is gutting the agencies and firing the firefighters we count on when disaster strikes, all to fund tax breaks for billionaires. He is making a dangerous crisis worse and leaving American communities to pay the price.

The *Wildfire Response and Readiness Act* meets the moment with a plan to protect our lands, ready our communities, and give firefighters the support they need and the benefits they deserve.

WHY WE NEED WILDFIRE ACTION NOW

Extreme heat, drying vegetation, and a century of fire suppression are stacking up, and 2026 is already on track to be a brutal year for fire.

- Drought has reached **extreme levels** across the country. Many areas of the West set **records for lack of snow this winter**, leaving lands dangerously dry and communities without drinking water.
- **A century of fire suppression policies** have left our forests overgrown and primed to burn hotter and faster, threatening communities.
- Massive fires in the Pacific Northwest, upper Midwest, and Canada pushed dense smoke over the Midwest and Eastern United States, pushing air quality to dangerous levels and forcing millions of Americans to stay indoors.

Fighting wildland fire is already a dangerous job. Trump's reckless budget and staffing cuts are making it worse.

- In Colorado, five wildland firefighters have lost their lives protecting communities from active fires.
- Trump laid off as many as 3,000 qualified wildland firefighters — red card holders — leaving the remaining firefighters stretched thin and without operational support. The administration has pressured those who remain to work overtime to close the gap.

Severe cuts to staff and federal investments are actively worsening the wildfire crisis across the country.

- Staffing cuts and the slow approval processes for new grants and contracts have stifled hazardous fuels reduction **by nearly 40 percent**, leaving forests, public lands, and surrounding towns exposed, **like Ely, Minnesota**.
- More than a quarter of the Forest Service's staff left in 2025 due to Trump's reckless cuts.
- In the middle of an active fire season, the administration wants to reorganize the Forest Service in a way that would **gut the very offices** handling wildfire research, preparedness, and response.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES

RESILIENT LANDS

The bill invests in wildfire prevention and post-fire restoration and recovery so that the forests and public lands around our homes and communities stay healthy and resilient to catastrophic fires. It also requires federal agencies to develop a 10-year wildfire plan so that the federal government coordinates with the people most impacted.

FIRE-SAFE COMMUNITIES

This bill will help families make their homes more resistant to fires and gives communities the tools to plan ahead so they are ready before a fire breaks out. It also encourages the development of new tools to spot fires faster and takes steps to address the harmful impacts of wildfire smoke, making sure we have clean air.

WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER SAFETY & WORKFORCE SECURITY

Wildland firefighters put their lives on the line to keep the rest of us safe. This legislation honors that work with better pay, leave, and retirement benefits. It also trains the next generation of wildland firefighters and expands the workforce. And after more than a quarter of land management agency staff were fired or left their jobs since January 2025, this bill prevents any more firings and keeps key wildfire and forestry research facilities open and running.

The *Wildfire Response and Readiness Act* has the practical, collaborative solutions to the wildfire crisis it will take to keep people safe, communities healthy, and take care of firefighters on the front lines.

- This legislative package is comprised of 25 bills from 11 Members of Congress.
- This bill draws on recommendations from the nonpartisan Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, which was authorized by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The bill includes numerous recommendations from the Commission's final report.