

Top Democrats on the House Natural Resources and Agriculture Committees Introduce the Wildfire Response and Readiness Act

A comprehensive legislative package comprising 25 bills that together outline a plan to respond to wildfires—protecting our lands, readying our communities, and giving federal firefighters the support they need and the benefits they deserve.

Washington, D.C. — Today, Natural Resources Committee Ranking Member Jared Huffman (CA-02), Assistant Democratic Leader and Federal Lands Subcommittee Ranking Member Joe Neguse (CO-02), Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Angie Craig (MN-02), Forestry and Horticulture Subcommittee Ranking Member Andrea Salinas (OR-06), and Congressman George Whitesides (CA-27) introduced the Wildfire Response and Readiness Act, a comprehensive package of wildland fire policy that meets the moment for Americans facing increasingly active, destructive, and life-threatening wildfires.

So far this year, wildfires have burned more than **5.5 million acres** across the United States. Coupled with extreme weather conditions, including record-breaking drought across the

West, and communities across the country are continuing to face increasingly dangerous wildfire conditions.

President Donald Trump and his administration have responded by gutting the public land management agencies and institutions responsible for keeping our lands resilient and accessible and our communities safe from catastrophic wildfire. This reckless approach places the United States in an untenable position, where the threat of wildfire has never been greater and federal land management agencies are less prepared than ever before.

The Wildfire Response and Readiness Act is House Democrats' affirmative response to the growing threat of catastrophic wildfires. It includes practical, collaborative solutions that aim to better protect the people and places we love while ultimately saving lives.

"Hotter summers and drier forests mean wildfires are burning more intensely and reaching towns that never used to worry about them. President Trump watched some of the worst fire seasons this country has seen. His response? Fire the people who run toward the flames for the rest of us. He hollowed out the agencies, ignored the warnings, and left towns across the West more exposed than they've been in decades. Democrats see what families in fire country are up against, and we refuse to leave them on their own. The Wildfire Response and Readiness Act delivers what Americans need: fair pay and job security for wildland firefighters, real help for families fire-proofing their homes, and healthier forests that stop small fires from becoming catastrophes. This is the fight of our time, and we will not let up until every community has the protection they need," said **Ranking Member Huffman**.

"Colorado has experienced some of the most devastating wildfires in the country—and as we've worked together to recover and rebuild, we've also drawn from hard-earned

lessons in the wake of these disasters to introduce this comprehensive package of policy proposals,” said **Assistant Leader Joe Neguse**. “The Wildfire Response and Readiness Act advances critical prevention, mitigation, and response strategies while delivering long-overdue support for our brave and heroic wildland firefighters, who risk life and limb to protect our communities and deserve fair compensation and benefits.”

“Minnesotans are tired of waking up to smoky skies and of witnessing their beloved public lands, like the Boundary Waters, quite literally go up in flames. This critical legislation will help protect rural communities, restore healthy forests and fairly compensate the firefighters serving on the frontlines,” said **Ranking Member Craig**.

“Oregon is already experiencing one of our worst wildfire seasons on record. Families are living with smoke, farmers and small businesses are facing disruptions, and rural communities are shouldering the burden of increasingly costly fires. We owe Oregon’s firefighters the tools they need to respond safely, and we owe our communities a government that prepares before disaster strikes. The Wildfire Response and Readiness Act brings together a comprehensive plan to strengthen prevention, improve coordination, protect homes and working lands, and help communities recover. I’m proud to co-lead this effort to make Oregon and communities across the country safer and more resilient,” said **Congresswoman Salinas**.

“Wildfires are a large and growing threat that will only get worse if we do not take decisive action at the federal level,” said **Congressman Whitesides**. “From making our homes safer to better managing our forests to bolstering firefighter resources and pay, this package would make us more resilient and significantly improve our ability to manage the national wildfire crisis.”

The Wildfire Response and Readiness Act has three main pillars. They are outlined below.

- **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:** The bill helps 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 and Workforce Security:** Wildland firefighters put their lives on the line to keep the rest of us safe. This bill 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.

To learn more, click [**HERE**](#).

Full bill text can be found [**HERE**](#), and a section-by-section [**HERE**](#).

The package is endorsed by American Forests, Defenders of Wildlife, Grassroots Wildland Firefighters, Megafire Action, National Federation of Federal Employees, Sierra Club, and Trust for Public Land.

To view their statements of support, click [**HERE**](#).

Press Contact

Mary Hurrell

(202) 225-5161