[DISCUSSION DRAFT]

[Discossion Diam 1]
119TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION H.R.
To increase the preparation of structural firefighters to assist in wildfire and wildland-urban interface fire response efforts and the coordination of firefighting teams across all levels of government, and for other purposes.
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Mr. Harder of California introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on
A BILL
To increase the preparation of structural firefighters to assist in wildfire and wildland-urban interface fire response efforts and the coordination of firefighting teams across all levels of government, and for other purposes.
1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,
3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.
4 This Act may be cited as the "[] Act of
5 2025".

1	SEC. 2. TRAINING PLAN AND GRANT PROGRAM UNDER THE
2	UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION.
3	(a) Establishment of National Training
4	Plan.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enact-
5	ment of this Act, the Administrator of the United States
6	Fire Administration, in consultation with the entities de-
7	scribed in subsection (b), shall publish a plan to train
8	structural firefighters in the United States to respond
9	safely and effectively to incidents of the following:
10	(1) Wildfire.
11	(2) Fire in the wildland-urban interface.
12	(b) Entities Described.—The entities described in
13	this subsection are the following:
14	(1) The Secretary of the Interior.
15	(2) The Secretary of Agriculture.
16	(3) The Superintendent of the National Acad-
17	emy for Fire Prevention and Control of the Federal
18	Emergency Management Agency.
19	(c) Guidelines.—The plan described in subsection
20	(a) shall include guidelines for a training curriculum that
21	incorporates the following:
22	(1) Such training materials developed by the
23	Superintendent of the National Academy for Fire
24	Prevention and Control pursuant to section 7 of the
25	Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974
26	(15 U.S.C. 2206).

1	(2) The material for courses S-130 and S-190
2	developed by the National Wildlife Coordinating
3	Group.
4	(d) Training Development Grants.—The Ad-
5	ministrator of the United State Fire Administration may
6	make a grant, on a competitive basis, to an eligible entity
7	to carry out a training program for structural firefighters
8	with a curriculum that—
9	(1) adheres to the plan described in subsection
10	(a); and
11	(2) satisfies the guidelines referred to in sub-
12	section (c).
13	(e) Eligibility.—An entity is an eligible entity and
14	eligible to apply for a grant described in subsection (d)
15	if the entity is a nonprofit organization that provides
16	training or development programs for structural fire-
17	fighters with demonstrated experience of the following:
18	(1) Developing curricula for classroom and
19	practical training to structural firefighters.
20	(2) Delivering teaching or training programs,
21	both in-person and online, to structural firefighters
22	on topics related to fireground safety and wildfire
23	operations.

1	(3) Collaboration with national nonprofit orga-
2	nizations to support research on firefighting safety
3	and the health and wellness of firefighters.
4	(f) Applications.—An eligible entity may apply to
5	the Administrator of the United States Fire Administra-
6	tion, in a form and manner determined by the Adminis-
7	trator, for a grant under this section if the application
8	includes a certification that the training program referred
9	to in subsection (d) is to be carried out in consultation
10	with each of the following:
11	(1) Leaders and line personnel of State and
12	local fire service agencies.
13	(2) Volunteer firefighters.
14	(3) State and local officials who maintain and
15	enforce building codes.
16	(4) Researchers with experience investigating
17	firefighting injuries and fatalities.
18	(g) Authorization of Appropriations.—
19	(1) In general.—There are authorized to be
20	appropriated to carry out this section \$5,000,000 for
21	each of fiscal years 2025 through 2030.
22	(2) Technical assistance.—The Adminis-
23	trator of the United Stars Fire Administration may
24	obligate and expend, for each fiscal year specified in
25	paragraph (1), not more than [] percent of the

1	amount authorized to be appropriated under such
2	paragraph for technical assistance.
3	(3) Carryover.—Amounts authorized to be
4	appropriated to carry out this section shall remain
5	available until expended.
6	SEC. 3. COORDINATION OF WILDFIRE AND WILDLAND-
7	URBAN INTERFACE FIRE OPERATIONS.
8	(a) Under Secretary of Agriculture for Fire
9	Coordination.—
10	(1) Establishment.—There is established in
11	the Department of Agriculture a position known as
12	the Under Secretary of Agriculture for Fire Coordi-
13	nation (referred to in this section as the "Under
14	Secretary"), who shall be appointed by the Presi-
15	dent, by and with the advice and consent of the Sen-
16	ate.
17	(2) Duties.—
18	(A) Fire preparedness and re-
19	SPONSE.—The Under Secretary shall serve as
20	the principal adviser to the Secretary of Agri-
21	culture for any matter that relates to the co-
22	ordination of Federal, State, and local govern-
23	ments in preparing for, and responding to, inci-
24	dents of the following:
25	(i) Wildfire.

1	(ii) Fires occurring in the wildfire-
2	urban interface.
3	(B) Integration and effectiveness of
4	FIREFIGHTING EFFORTS.—The Under Sec-
5	retary shall coordinate with the Administrator
6	of the United States Fire Administration with
7	respect to the following:
8	(i) Improving the effectiveness of fire-
9	fighting operations conducted by the Sec-
10	retary of Agriculture.
11	(ii) Advising the Secretary of Agri-
12	culture regarding the coordination de-
13	scribed in subparagraph (A).
14	(C) OTHER DUTIES.—The Under Sec-
15	retary shall exercise such other functions, and
16	perform such other duties, as may be required
17	by law or prescribed by the Secretary of Agri-
18	culture.
19	(b) WILDLAND FIRE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL; NA-
20	TIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP.—
21	(1) In general.—Not later than 60 days after
22	the date of the enactment of this section, the Sec-
23	retary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Inte-
24	rior shall take such necessary actions to ensure that

1	a representative of a national labor organization rep-
2	resentin refighters is a member of the following:
3	(A) The Wildland Fire Leadership Council.
4	(B) The National Wildfire Coordinating
5	Group.
6	(2) APPLICATION.—A representative described
7	in paragraph (1) may be a member of the Wildland
8	Fire Leadership Council and the National Wildfire
9	Coordinating Group at the same time if the Sec-
10	retary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Inte-
11	rior determine such is appropriate.
12	SEC. 4. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FIREFIGHTING PER-
13	SONNEL.
13 14	sonnel. (a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
14	(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
14 15	(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on
14 15 16 17	(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the
14 15 16 17	(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist
14 15 16 17	(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist the qualified agency head in conducting operations, in re-
114 115 116 117 118	(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist the qualified agency head in conducting operations, in response to incidents of wildfire or fire in the wildland-urban
14 15 16 17 18 19 20	(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist the qualified agency head in conducting operations, in response to incidents of wildfire or fire in the wildland-urban interface.
114 115 116 117 118 119 220 221	(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist the qualified agency head in conducting operations, in response to incidents of wildfire or fire in the wildland-urban interface. (b) Reimbursement.—A qualified agency head who
14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	(a) In General.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Defense may authorize, on the request of a qualified agency head, firefighters in the Department of Defense to conduct operations, or to assist the qualified agency head in conducting operations, in response to incidents of wildfire or fire in the wildland-urban interface. (b) Reimbursement.—A qualified agency head who makes a request to the Secretary of Defense under subsection (a) shall reimburse the Secretary for the costs of

1	retary, the Secretary of Agriculture, and the Secretary of
2	the Interior.
3	(c) Report to Congress.—The Secretary of De-
4	fense shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
5	mittees a report on financial and logistical barriers to con-
6	ducting the operations or providing the assistance de-
7	scribed in subsection (a).
8	(d) Definition of Qualified Agency Head.—In
9	this section, the term "qualified agency head" means any
10	of the following:
11	(1) The Secretary of Agriculture.
12	(2) The Secretary of the Interior.
13	(3) The head of a relevant agency, as deter-
14	mined by the Secretary of Defense.
15	SEC. 5. FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFETY RESEARCH IN
16	THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OCCUPA-
17	TIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH.
18	Section 22 of the Occupational Safety and Health Act
19	of 1970 (29 U.S.C. 671) is amended by adding at the end
	of 1010 (20 C.S.C. 011) is afficience by adding at the cita
20	the following new subsection:
20 21	
	the following new subsection:
21	the following new subsection: "(i) PROGRAM OF FIREFIGHTER HEALTH AND SAFE-
21 22	the following new subsection: "(i) Program of Firefighter Health and Safe- Ty Research.—

1	"(A) To protect the respiratory health of
2	firefighters responding to incidents of wildfire
3	or fires in the wildland-urban interface.
4	"(B) To identify and measure per- and
5	polyfluoroalkyl substances (commonly referred
6	to as 'PFAS') and other carcinogens which may
7	be present in any of the following:
8	"(i) Areas affected by—
9	"(I) incidents of wildfire or fire
10	in the wildland-urban interface; or
11	"(II) firefighting operations con-
12	ducted in response to such incidents.
13	"(ii) Protective equipment used by
14	firefighters responding to such incidents.
15	"(iii) Any other setting, as determined
16	by the Director.
17	"(2) Consultation with stakeholders.—
18	"(A) In general.—In carrying out this
19	subsection, the Director shall consult with the
20	following:
21	"(i) The Administrator of the United
22	States Fire Administration.
23	"(ii) The Secretary of Agriculture.
24	"(iii) Representatives from such non-
25	profit organizations or labor unions rep-

1 resenting firefighters and fire officers in
2 the public sector.
3 "(B) PFAS exposure investigations.—
4 In identifying any other setting under para-
5 graph (1)(B)(iii), the Director shall consult
6 with the following:
7 "(i) The entities specified in subpara-
8 graph (A).
9 "(ii) Stakeholders from the industries
that manufacture equipment for, or pro-
vide assistance to, firefighters.
12 "(iii) Structural firefighters who have
responded to incidents of wildfire or fires
in the wildland-urban interface.
[What about the Secretary of the Interior? NIOSH
is part of the CDC in the HHS Department. A., the
PFAS Act (Public Law 117-248, the heart of which you
can find as 6 U.S.C. 323) has a similar program in
FEMA about firefighter exposure to PFAS that also
brings in the EPA Administrator and other agency
heads.]
15 "(3) Reports to congress.—Not later than
16 180 days after the date of the enactment of this
subsection and annually thereafter, the Director

1	shall submit to the appropriate congressional com-
2	mittees a report on the following:
3	"(A) The progress of the Director in car-
4	rying out this subsection.
5	"(B) Any research findings identified as a
6	result of the research conducted under this sub-
7	section.
8	"(4) Authorization of appropriations.—
9	There are authorized to be appropriated
10	\$20,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through
11	2030 to carry out this subsection.
12	"(5) Definition of Appropriate congres-
13	SIONAL COMMITTEES.—In this subsection, the term
14	'appropriate congressional committees' means the
15	following:
16	"(A) [Which congressional commit s?]".
17	SEC. 6. MENTAL HEALTH ASSISTANCE FOR FIRST RE-
18	SPONDERS.
19	Section 327(d) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster
20	Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
21	5165f(d)) is amended—
22	(1) in paragraph (1)—
23	(A) by striking "Administration" and in-
24	serting "Administrator"; and

1	(B) by inserting ", subject to paragraph
2	(4)" after "participation"; and
3	(2) by adding at the end the following new
4	paragraph:
5	"(4) Criteria for mental health assist-
6	ANCE.—
7	"(A) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator
8	shall include the following in the criteria de-
9	scribed in paragraph (1):
10	"(i) Criteria specifying that a task
11	force with firefighters or other emergency
12	responders as members shall include, as
13	members of the task force, mental health
14	practitioners qualified to treat, monitor, or
15	assess such firefighters or other emergency
16	responders for post-traumatic stress inju-
17	ries or other mental or behavioral health
18	conditions attributable to service in the
19	task force.
20	"(ii) Criteria for each member of a
21	task force to be trained in peer mental
22	health support services and to provide such
23	services to an emergency responder serving
24	in the task force.

1	"(iii) Criteria establishing that the
2	peer mental health support services re-
3	ferred to in clause (ii) include the fol-
4	lowing:
5	"(I) Identification of warning
6	signs of post-traumatic stress injuries.
7	"(II) Recognition of symptoms of
8	behavioral health conditions.
9	"(III) Application of de-esca-
10	lation methods.
11	"(IV) Referral to mental health
12	practitioners when appropriate.
13	"(B) Consultation.—The Administrator
14	may consult with nonprofit organizations to de-
15	velop the criteria described in subparagraph (A)
16	and provide grants to such organizations to
17	provide training to task forces to comply with
18	such criteria.
19	"(C) Authorization of Appropria-
20	TIONS.—From amounts authorized to be appro-
21	priated to carry out this section, the Adminis-
22	trator may obligate and expend not more than
23	,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025
24	through 2030 to carry out this paragraph.".

1	SEC. 7. SUPPLEMENTAL FIREFIGHTER ASSISTANCE.
2	(a) In General.—Section 33(c)(3) of the Federal
3	Fire Prevention and Control 💆 of 1974 (15 U.S.C.
4	2229(c)(3)) is amended by adding at the end the following
5	new subparagraphs:
6	"(O) To obtain personal protective equip-
7	ment suitable for responding to incidents of
8	wildfire or fires in the wildland-urban interface.
9	"(P) To train firefighting personnel in re-
10	sponding to incidents of wildfire or fires in the
11	wildland-urban interface.".
12	(b) Authorization of Appropriations for Spe-
13	CIAL Grants.—In addition to amounts otherwise made
14	available, there is authorized to be appropriated
15	\$100,000,000 for fiscal year 2025 to make grants to carry
16	out the purposes described in subparagraphs (O) and (P)
17	of section $33(c)(3)$ of the Federal Fire Prevention and
18	Control Act of 1974 (15 U.S.C. 2229), as amended by
19	subsection (a).
20	SEC. 8. REPORT TO CONGRESS ON OPERATIONS INVOLV-
21	ING [WILDFILES AND] FIRES IN THE
22	
	WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE.
23	WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE. (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the
23	(a) In General.—Not later than 1 year after the

1	representing firefighters as determined appropriate by the
2	Administrator, shall submit to the appropriate congres-
3	sional committees a report that contains information relat-
4	ing to the following:
5	(1) The extent to which local fire service pro-
6	viders train personnel to respond to [wildfi and]
7	fires in the wildland-urban interface.
8	(2) The effectiveness of such training.
9	(3) Obstacles that prevent the coordination de-
10	scribed in section 3(a)(2)(A), with specific case stud-
11	ies to illustrate such obstacles. [But note that this
12	refers back to both wildfires and fires p the
13	wildland-urban interface.
14	(b) Definition of Appropriate Congressional
15	Committees.—The term "appropriate congressional
16	committees" means the following:
17	(1) The Committee on Natural Resources of the
18	House of Representatives.
19	(2) The Committee on Science, Space, and
20	Technology of the House of Representatives.
21	(3) The Committee on Natural Resources of the
22	Senate.
23	(4) The Committee on Homeland Security and
24	Governmental Affairs of the Senate.