

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4791

To exempt the United States Geological Survey from hiring freezes or reductions in force, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 29, 2025

Mrs. DINGELL (for herself, Ms. DELBENE, and Ms. STRICKLAND) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

A BILL

To exempt the United States Geological Survey from hiring freezes or reductions in force, 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 “Keep USGS Strong
5 Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) United States Geological Survey (USGS)
9 plays a critical role in advancing our understanding

1 of the natural environment through its extensive re-
2 search and data collection efforts.

3 (2) The USGS plays a vital role in studying the
4 Great Lakes, which contain 20 percent of the
5 world's freshwater. Through monitoring water qual-
6 ity, invasive species, and ecosystem health, USGS
7 research informs efforts to protect and restore these
8 critical resources. Their work supports fisheries
9 management, pollution control, and the mitigation of
10 threats such as harmful algal blooms, ensuring the
11 long-term sustainability of the Great Lakes for mil-
12 lions of residents.

13 (3) The USGS operates a comprehensive na-
14 tionwide seismic network that continuously monitors
15 earthquake activity. This data is essential for assess-
16 ing seismic hazards, informing building codes, and
17 enhancing public safety through early warning sys-
18 tems.

19 (4) Through detailed monitoring of surface
20 water and groundwater resources, the USGS pro-
21 vides vital information on water availability, quality,
22 and trends. This supports water resource planning
23 and sustainable management across diverse regions,
24 especially in drought-prone and rapidly urbanizing
25 areas.

1 (5) The USGS's topographic and thematic
2 maps, along with its geospatial datasets, are funda-
3 mental tools used by government agencies, research-
4 ers, and the public. These resources support land
5 use planning, environmental conservation, and dis-
6 aster response.

7 (6) Beyond earthquakes, the USGS conducts
8 extensive research on other natural hazards such as
9 volcanoes, landslides, and floods. Their work helps
10 predict and mitigate the impacts of these events,
11 thereby reducing risks to communities.

12 (7) The USGS leads long-term monitoring of
13 ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and environmental
14 health. This research informs conservation efforts
15 and policies aimed at protecting biodiversity and
16 natural resources.

17 (8) The USGS assesses the availability and en-
18 vironmental impact of mineral and energy resources,
19 contributing to the sustainable development of these
20 critical materials.

21 (9) The USGS serves everyday Americans by
22 providing essential scientific information that di-
23 rectly impacts their safety, health, and quality of
24 life. From monitoring earthquakes and floods to en-
25 sure timely warnings and disaster preparedness, to

1 tracking water quality and availability that affects
2 drinking water and agriculture, the USGS’s work
3 touches many aspects of daily life.

4 (10) Their mapping and geospatial data help
5 communities plan infrastructure and manage natural
6 resources effectively, while their research on eco-
7 systems supports conservation efforts that preserve
8 recreational areas and wildlife. By making this data
9 openly accessible, the USGS empowers individuals,
10 local governments, and businesses to make informed
11 decisions that promote resilience and sustainability
12 across the country.

13 (11) The USGS’s multidisciplinary approach
14 and commitment to open data ensure that policy-
15 makers, scientists, and the public have access to reli-
16 able, up-to-date information crucial for informed de-
17 cision-making and risk management.

18 **SEC. 3. EXEMPTING USGS FROM HIRING FREEZE OR RE-**
19 **DUCTION IN FORCE.**

20 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the
21 United States Geological Survey (in this section referred
22 to as “USGS”) shall not be subject to—

23 (1) the Presidential Memorandum issued on
24 January 20, 2025, titled “Hiring Freeze” or any ex-
25 tension of such Memorandum;

1 (2) any reduction in force of employees of
2 USGS, or any other significant reduction of such
3 employees, if Congress has enacted a law appro-
4 priating funds for the salary and expenses of such
5 employees; or

6 (3) any cancellation, without approval of the
7 Director of USGS, of a lease of real property en-
8 tered into by USGS.

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