

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 844

Honoring the lives and service of Emily Barker, Nicholas Hutcherson, Sydney Watson, Nathan Matthews, Nicholas Dale, and all those who serve on the front lines of wildland firefighting efforts in the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 7, 2026

Mr. BENNET (for himself, Mr. LEE, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, and Mr. CURTIS)
submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Honoring the lives and service of Emily Barker, Nicholas Hutcherson, Sydney Watson, Nathan Matthews, Nicholas Dale, and all those who serve on the front lines of wildland firefighting efforts in the United States.

Whereas the 2026 wildfire season has already placed extraordinary demands on wildland firefighters, aviation crews, emergency responders, dispatchers, and support personnel across the Western United States;

Whereas, on June 27, 2026, 2 members of the Rifle, Colorado, Helitack crew, Emily Barker of Michigan and Sydney Watson of Alabama, and 1 member of the Pitman Valley, Arizona, Helitack crew on temporary assignment in Rifle, Colorado, Nicholas Hutcherson of Arizona, gave their lives while responding to the Knowles and Gore

Fires, which later merged into the Snyder Fire, along the Utah-Colorado border;

Whereas 2 additional firefighters were seriously injured while responding alongside their fallen colleagues, including Nathan Matthews of Nebraska assigned to the Rifle Helitack crew, who died as a result of his injuries on July 24, 2026;

Whereas, on July 12, 2026, firefighting pilot Nicholas Dale of British Columbia, Canada, gave his life while supporting suppression efforts on the Gold Mountain Fire in Colorado;

Whereas Emily Barker, Nicholas Hutcherson, Sydney Watson, Nathan Matthews, and Nicholas Dale answered the call to protect others, and in doing so, gave their lives;

Whereas the members of the Rifle and Pitman Valley Helitack crews carried out one of the most demanding assignments in wildland firefighting, deploying by helicopter into remote terrain to slow the advance of dangerous wildfires; and

Whereas wildland firefighters, aviation crews, emergency responders, dispatchers, and support personnel continue to put themselves in danger to protect lives, communities, infrastructure, and natural resources throughout the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) honors the lives, service, and ultimate sac-
3 rifice of Emily Barker, Nicholas Hutcherson, Sydney
4 Watson, Nathan Matthews, and Nicholas Dale;

5 (2) expresses its deepest sympathies to their
6 families, friends, and colleagues, and recognizes the

1 courage and continued recovery of the firefighters
2 who were injured in the line of duty;

3 (3) expresses the gratitude of the people of the
4 United States to the wildland firefighters, aviation
5 crews, emergency responders, dispatchers, and sup-
6 port personnel who continue to protect communities
7 throughout the United States;

8 (4) recognizes that protecting communities from
9 catastrophic wildfire requires both responsible stew-
10 ardship of forests and public lands and continued
11 support for the wildland firefighters, aviation crews,
12 emergency responders, dispatchers, and support per-
13 sonnel who put themselves in danger to protect lives,
14 communities, and natural resources; and

15 (5) invites the people of the United States to
16 honor the courage, sacrifice, and service of the men
17 and women who risk their lives each wildfire season
18 in defense of their fellow citizens.

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