

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 279

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that allocating the appropriate resources to wildland fire management is needed to protect the environment, the economy, and the people of the United States, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 26, 2013

Mr. TIPTON (for himself, Mr. PEARCE, Mrs. LUMMIS, Mr. COFFMAN, Mr. LAMBORN, and Mr. GARDNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that allocating the appropriate resources to wildland fire management is needed to protect the environment, the economy, and the people of the United States, and for other purposes.

Whereas the thoughts and prayers of the Members of the House of Representatives go out to individuals and families who have lost loved ones and homes to wildfire;

Whereas the Members of the House of Representatives express the utmost gratitude to wildland fire firefighters

and first responders who bravely protect life and property;

Whereas nearly 10 million acres of land burned in the United States in 2012;

Whereas the acreage burned by wildfires has steadily increased over the past decade;

Whereas the most destructive fire in the history of the State of Colorado and the largest fire in the history of the State of New Mexico destroyed hundreds of homes and hundreds of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat in 2012;

Whereas Federal forest and land management officials continue to request fewer funds to fight wildfires;

Whereas the funding available for wildland fire suppression in the Wildland Fire Management Account of the Forest Service was cut by \$461 million from fiscal year 2011 to fiscal year 2013;

Whereas the Wildland Fire Hazardous Fuels Reduction Account of the Forest Service was cut by \$22 million from fiscal year 2011 to fiscal year 2013 and the latest budget request asks for another \$116 million decrease;

Whereas the Collaborative Forest Restoration Program, a program that benefits local economies and improves the overall health of the landscape, has taken a 20 percent cut in funding over the past 2 years;

Whereas senior Forest Service officials have described a Federal land management system hamstrung by “analysis paralysis”;

Whereas decades of Federal mismanagement have increased fuel loads on Federal forest land and led to increased risk of catastrophic wildfire;

Whereas the Forest Service has replaced responsible, environmentally sound timber thinning with allowing fires to burn through overcrowded forests;

Whereas the bark beetle epidemic has destroyed 40 million acres of forest in North America; and

Whereas academic studies indicate that bark-beetle-infected trees can still be salvaged for timber to be used in mills and contribute to small businesses and local economies: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
2 resentatives that—

3 (1) allocating the appropriate resources to
4 wildland fire management is needed to protect the
5 environment, the economy, and the people of the
6 United States;

7 (2) the bravery of the men and women who risk
8 their lives to extinguish these conflagrations should
9 never be questioned;

10 (3) a healthy forest policy must include pre-
11 scribed thinning;

12 (4) funding to fight and prevent wildfires is es-
13 sential to public safety, environmental protection,
14 and economic growth;

1 (5) people who live in or near national forests
2 in the United States have a right to expect the
3 greatest possible protection for their homes and
4 property;

5 (6) the Government should not continue to ac-
6 quire more land when hundreds of millions of acres
7 already controlled by the Government are mis-
8 managed; and

9 (7) the Forest Service should proactively man-
10 age Federal forest lands in a manner that—

11 (A) protects life and property;

12 (B) prevents catastrophic wildfire;

13 (C) promotes forest and watershed health;

14 and

15 (D) creates jobs and economic development
16 in the forest products industry.

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