

H.R. 5648, the Emergency Wildland Fire Response Act of 2008 which Chairman PETERSON and I introduced along with a bipartisan group of our colleagues, provides this comprehensive solution. Unfortunately, negotiations for a more comprehensive solution were cut short.

I'm pleased to see that the authors of the FLAME Act have incorporated aspects of H.R. 5648 that encourage communities to step up to the plate and become "fire-ready" and encourage the Agencies to contain costs in their firefighting efforts.

Unfortunately, even with these improvements, the FLAME Act ignores the underlying problem causing the increases in firefighting costs—the unhealthy condition of our Federal forests. We will continue to see skyrocketing firefighting costs and more damage to our forests, watersheds, and communities unless we take steps to reduce fire risk in our Federal forests. We must provide the Agencies additional tools to get our Federal forests in a healthy, more fire resilient condition.

My alternative bill, H.R. 5648 provides a new contracting tool for the Forest Service to partner with States to address these unhealthy conditions in Federal forests. This authority has been tested in Colorado and Utah where it's proven to be very effective. Unfortunately, H.R. 5541 contains no such tools.

Mr. Speaker, as California and other States are dealing with massive wildfires even as we speak, we shouldn't squander our time with legislation that is only half the solution. H.R. 5541 is akin to using the watering can to fight a wildfire: it might have some short-term benefit of slowing down the flames, but ultimately, it won't stop the fire.

That being said, I will vote for this bill because it does move the ball forward. I'm hopeful that we can improve it as we move forward and ask my colleagues to join me in this effort.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5541, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING THE FIREFIGHTERS FROM CALIFORNIA AND THROUGHOUT THE UNITED STATES FOR THEIR COURAGEOUS ACTIONS AND SACRIFICES IN FIGHTING THE CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1322) commending the firefighters from California and throughout the United States for their courageous actions and sacrifices in fighting the California wildfires.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1322

Whereas, since June 20, 2008, there have been 1,781 wildfires in California started by

natural causes, including lightning, or by human activity;

Whereas 630,886 acres of land have burned in these wildfires, and, as of July 8, 2008, there are 323 wildfires still burning in California;

Whereas significant portions of National Forest System land and wilderness areas continue to burn in the Los Padres, Klamath, Shasta, Trinity, Mendocino, Plumas, Eldorado, Tahoe, Six Rivers, and Lassen National Forests;

Whereas areas of Butte, Monterey, Santa Barbara, and Shasta counties are under evacuation orders, and precautionary evacuation orders currently exist in areas of Kern, Mendocino, Monterey, Santa Barbara, and Plumas counties;

Whereas the wildfires are threatening 8,874 residences, 168 commercial buildings, and 2,085 outbuildings, but the heroic efforts of firefighters have limited the destruction to 40 residences, 1 commercial building, and 61 outbuildings;

Whereas firefighters have already been working for weeks on the front lines of a fire season that is just beginning;

Whereas firefighters have risked their lives and endured great hardship to protect life, property, and the environment;

Whereas there are currently 18,415 personnel committed, as well as 1,403 fire engines, 388 hand crews, 269 bulldozers, 392 water tenders, 31 air tankers, 30 incident management teams, and 95 helicopters;

Whereas 40 States and the District of Columbia have provided assistance to fight the wildfires;

Whereas the cooperative, unified approach to addressing wildland fires by Federal, State, local, tribal, and volunteer agencies have worked as one team under California's innovative incident command system;

Whereas the wildfires have been fought in a manner consistent with wilderness and wildlife protection, including protection of endangered species such as the Southern Sea Otter;

Whereas the people of California and the United States recognize that the dedication of the firefighters will remain steadfast throughout the ongoing suppression, repair, and rebuilding efforts;

Whereas firefighters continue to make progress in containing wildfires throughout California, and, as of July 8, 2008, more than 1,400 fires have been contained due to the diligent and tireless efforts of firefighters from California and throughout the United States, and

Whereas several firefighters have been injured and one firefighter has given his life while fighting the wildfires: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends firefighters from California and throughout the United States for their courageous actions and sacrifices in fighting wildfires on National Forest System land and other public lands in California;

(2) acknowledges the continued work of firefighters to protect National Forest System land, other public lands, and private property from further damage;

(3) praises the people of California for their great courage in this time of crisis; and

(4) extends its heartfelt sympathies to the families of those who have lost loved ones or their homes, businesses, or other property in the wildfires.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SALI) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from West Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, since June 20, 2008, as we have heard the distinguished Speaker tell us, there have been 1,781 wildfires in the State of California, over 600,000 acres of land have burned, and there are 323 fires still burning in the State. Firefighters have been working for weeks on the front lines of these fires, risking their lives and enduring great hardship. These firefighters are making progress in containing California's wildfires. As to date, over 1,400 fires have been contained.

Sadly, several firefighters have been injured and one firefighter has given his life in fighting these devastating wildfires in California.

This resolution commends these firefighters for their courageous actions and sacrifices in fighting the wildfires in California. The resolution also extends heartfelt sympathies to the families of those who have lost their homes, businesses, or loved ones in this tragedy.

I ask my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SALI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I too rise today to commend the heroic efforts of firefighters throughout our Nation. At times they are called to pay the ultimate sacrifice to save the life and property of others. I have had the honor of meeting the men and women who fight these wildfires in my State of Idaho, and there is no greater example of courage than these folks.

I understand how important it is to provide firefighters who battle wildfires with the right tools they need to do their job. Threats to human life are compounded by the fact that more and more people are living in homes near the fire-prone forests, placing themselves and the firefighters who try to protect them at greater risk.

In April of this year, I offered an amendment to the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2008 that allowed the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration to develop and distribute information on the importance of clearing biomass from Federal lands. This commonsense amendment will require USFA to work in consultation with other Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management, to ensure that the USFA provides the best possible recommendation. As we come upon another deadly

and costly fire season, this information is as vital as ever. We must provide our Federal employees, who are the best in the world, all of the tools they need to keep our communities and themselves safe from catastrophic wildfires.

I urge the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee to hold more hearings on the crisis situation in our Nation's forests. We have had just one hearing this year on the wildfire problem compared to six last Congress. I urge Members on both sides of the aisle to continue to work on providing firefighters and our public land management officials with the necessary tools they need to do their job. As firefighters risk life and limb to protect us, the least we can do is to provide them with everything they need.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to yield such time as he may consume to the author of this resolution commending our firefighters, the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR).

Mr. FARR. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for yielding. I rise, supporting this resolution, with the backing of almost all the Members of Congress and certainly many co-authors that are on here.

This resolution commends the firefighters who are fighting. On this incredible map, you can just see what the extent of fires are in California. Having come off the fire in the Big Sur region that I represent, you can't help but have an incredible amount of pride for the ability to call to order firemen and women from all over the United States, and in this case, because we are so over strapped, we are now asking help from Mexico with both crews and equipment. We have had firefighters come down from Canada and, as I understand, CAL FIRE is negotiating now with New Zealand and Australia to even bring in more personnel.

These firefighters work nonstop. They are on 12 hours and then off 12 hours. But they have to work every day. They don't stop on weekends. They just keep going out of the camps and into the fire lines. As was pointed out by the Speaker just a moment ago, the tragedy for two of those workers, one a volunteer fireman from Anderson Valley Fire Department, Robert Roland, died on the fire line of heart failure. John Hermo, who is a firefighter, full-time professional firefighter from Oregon, came down to fight the California fires and got some time off after so many days on the fire, and during his rest, just not being on the fire line, drowned in the river there, in the Kern River. It's really a tragedy. Here, these families have sent off these young folks to help us to respond as first responders, as emergency responders.

So this resolution is a profound debt of gratitude to them. I know that those firefighters can't see this on their C-SPAN at home, but certainly the par-

ents and relatives of all of those who have sent loved ones to these fires.

Fires have threatened 9,000 homes and businesses. There are still 223 wildland fires burning in California. More than 14,000 fires have already been contained because of the work of the firefighters. There are 18,000 personnel, firefighters on the lines right now, and there have been evacuation orders in Kern, Mendocino, Santa Barbara, Plumas, and in my county, and I'd like to personally thank our sheriff, Mike Kanalakis, for lifting the mandatory evacuation, which made people leave their homes in the rural area, many of whom felt that they were best suited to protect those homes. That evacuation order has been lifted and now the Big Sur Highway, Highway 1, is back in order for local personnel.

So our firefighters are working nonstop, and some for 4 weeks without rest. They are going to need rest. You can't stop the fire burnings. You're going to have to bring in more personnel. That's why we are reaching out to other countries.

So I want to thank those who I saw on the lines, the people I talked to, the communities that rallied around them. This is a heartfelt thanks from the Congress of the United States of America to the personnel in this country who respond on a basis to keep our cities and rural areas safe during wildfires. Thank you very much.

Mr. SALI. I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP).

Mr. WAMP. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I especially thank the author of the resolution, Mr. FARR of California, for his leadership and insight here in the Congress. It's a privilege to serve alongside him. A very thoughtful man.

I want to join the chorus in praising these firefighters and encouraging others to answer this extraordinarily difficult call to public service every time that one of these fires encroaches on areas where people live and work. But I do find it ironic, having been here for 14 years, from time to time these issues cross over with each other because, frankly, the nexus between the environment, which is a part of these fires; energy, which is also a piece of this; and national security is the most important challenge of our generation, this nexus. And they are connected.

Over the last 14 years I have had the privilege, even with Mr. FARR, to travel to places like Yellowstone and Yosemite Valley and the Olympics in Washington State and actually see with the stewards of our public lands, which represent over one-third of the land mass of the continental United States, is government-owned land, and actually be there with the Forest Service, the Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management personnel, many of whom are registered foresters, who will say that one of the biggest problems with the creation of these fires is the dead and dying timber which we have

refused to clean out in terms of our stewardship of the forest. You can't just leave this forest alone and let all of this timber become just a matchbox on the ground without huge problems with the fires.

So the mindset that says leave all forests alone and do not touch them, even to the point of not cleaning up the dead and dying timber, which creates with any kind of a spark these out-of-control fires that come into California into the areas where people live, the mindset that says, for whatever reason, do not touch these forests, is a flawed mindset that causes these fires.

The best thing we can do for the firefighters is to try to mitigate the fires with good forestry practices, good stewardship, and logical environmental response. I consider myself a very logical and rational lawmaker on issues of the environment. But that is the same mindset that says under no circumstance do you take a piece of land in the middle of the Arctic tundra and not explore for oil and gas there.

That is the same mindset. It's a flawed mindset. That is why we have the energy pinch. It's a mindset that says States cannot even go into the Outer Continental Shelf, if they want to, and explore oil and gas resources, when in fact we should leave that up to the States.

So here we are, kind of feeling the pinch and the adverse consequences of extremist environmental policy, whether it's fires, whether it's energy sources. We have to come back to a rational, logical modern approach.

Now I am very much part Cherokee Indian. The Cherokee National Forest is in my district. The Cherokee used to intentionally burn the forest. Why? Because it helped the nutrients in the ground. It became more robust. It's a natural cycle. They intentionally did it.

Speaking of good forestry practices, they were not only not afraid of fire, they used fire for the right purposes so that the forest wouldn't get out of control and just burn wildly.

It's that kind of thinking, long-term stewardship, that we need to get back to so that the political winds of the day do not stymie us on good management practices with our forests or good energy policy as a Nation so that everything is not off-limits to the point that the lights go out in California or we are paying \$4.50 for a gallon of gas.

These are unacceptable outcomes when all we have to do is take a reasonable, responsible approach from the center of America, representing average people, and saying, We are all for stewardship, we are all for participating in global warming, but we don't want to do it at the expense of our future. Our economic future, our quality of life, all these issues come together.

So I would implore the leadership—I understand the Speaker of the House yesterday said in fact the SPR, the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, does need to be released so that we can increase some supply of oil. I am glad to

see these steps are taken finally to recognize that supply and demand are at stake here, they are at work here, and that we need to increase the supply of oil and gas in this country. Not that that is the cure-all, end-all, but it's one of many things that we need to do in an all-of-the-above approach to energy, which is connected to the environment and good long-term stewardship for our country.

I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlelady from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my committee chairman for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, as a representative of areas affected by the recent wildfires and as a cosponsor of House Resolution 1322, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and I thank my colleague and my neighboring Member of Congress, Congressman FARR, for introducing this resolution.

In the last 3 weeks, more than 1,700 wildfires have burned hundreds of thousands of acres in our home State of California. In my district alone, the Gap Fire, one of the State's highest priorities now, has burned nearly 10,000 acres and threatened several hundred homes in the city of Goleta. Yet, despite high winds and temperatures, our incredible firefighters and emergency personnel have limited the destruction, have saved hundreds of homes, hundreds of lives.

I am so proud to say that California's emergency preparedness system and procedures are among the best in the Nation. My constituents in Goleta are the most recent beneficiaries of this system. I have to admit that I am a little biased toward our firefighters as well. Years ago, as a school nurse, they taught me CPR, they taught me first aid, they helped me train our school personnel. They are a wonderful asset to safety and preparedness in our communities.

From their base at Dos Pueblos High School, State and local officials have worked together to move resources from across the State to areas that needed them most. They're masters at doing this. If not for this organized and swift effort, many more acres, homes, and lives could have been lost.

As we speak here today on the floor of this House, in this well, thousands of men and women are putting their lives on the line, enduring great hardships to protect our wildlife, our property; indeed, our lives. Today, we commend these amazing individuals and we express our gratitude at their sacrifice and their service.

I urge my colleagues to join Mr. FARR, to join all of us in thanking and honoring these courageous individuals by supporting this legislation.

Mr. SALI. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, so I would yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. RAHALL. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1322.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order: ordering the previous question on H. Res. 1318, and adopting H. Res. 1318, if ordered.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. The second electronic vote will be conducted as a 5-minute vote.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5811, ELECTRONIC MES- SAGE PRESERVATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on ordering the previous question on House Resolution 1318, on which a recorded vote was ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 228, noes 193, not voting 13, as follows:

[Roll No. 474]

AYES—228

Abercrombie	Cohen	Gordon
Ackerman	Conyers	Green, Al
Allen	Cooper	Green, Gene
Altmire	Costa	Grijalva
Andrews	Costello	Gutierrez
Arcuri	Courtney	Hall (NY)
Baca	Cramer	Hare
Baldwin	Crowley	Harman
Barrow	Cuellar	Hastings (FL)
Bean	Cummings	Hereth Sandlin
Becerra	Davis (AL)	Higgins
Berkley	Davis (CA)	Hinches
Berman	Davis (IL)	Hinojosa
Berry	Davis, Lincoln	Hirono
Bishop (GA)	DeFazio	Holt
Bishop (NY)	DeGette	Honda
Blumenauer	Delahunt	Hooley
Boren	DeLauro	Hoyer
Boucher	Dicks	Inslee
Boyd (FL)	Dingell	Israel
Boyda (KS)	Doggett	Jackson (IL)
Brady (PA)	Donnelly	Jackson-Lee
Braley (IA)	Doyle	(TX)
Brown, Corrine	Edwards (MD)	Jefferson
Butterfield	Edwards (TX)	Johnson (GA)
Capps	Ellison	Johnson, E. B.
Capuano	Ellsworth	Jones (OH)
Cardoza	Emanuel	Kagen
Carnahan	Engel	Kanjorski
Carney	Eshoo	Kaptur
Carson	Etheridge	Kennedy
Castle	Farr	Kildee
Castor	Fattah	Kilpatrick
Cazayoux	Filner	Kind
Chandler	Poster	Klein (FL)
Clarke	Frank (MA)	Kucinich
Clay	Giffords	Langevin
Cleaver	Gillibrand	Larsen (WA)
Clyburn	Gonzalez	Larson (CT)

Lee	Obey	Sires
Levin	Olver	Skelton
Lewis (GA)	Ortiz	Slaughter
Lipinski	Pallone	Smith (WA)
Loeb	Pascarell	Snyder
Lofgren, Zoe	Pastor	Solis
Lowey	Payne	Space
Lynch	Perlmutter	Speier
Mahoney (FL)	Peterson (MN)	Spratt
Maloney (NY)	Pomeroy	Stark
Markey	Price (NC)	Stupak
Marshall	Rahall	Sutton
Matheson	Rangel	Tanner
Matsui	Reichert	Tauscher
McCarthy (NY)	Reyes	Taylor
McCollum (MN)	Richardson	Thompson (CA)
McDermott	Rodriguez	Thompson (MS)
McGovern	Ross	Tierney
McIntyre	Rothman	Towns
McNerney	Roybal-Allard	Tsongas
McNulty	Ruppersberger	Udall (NM)
Meek (FL)	Ryan (OH)	Van Hollen
Meeks (NY)	Salazar	Velázquez
Michaud	Sánchez, Linda	Visclosky
Miller (NC)	T.	Walz (MN)
Miller, George	Sanchez, Loretta	Wasserman
Mitchell	Sarbanes	Schultz
Mollohan	Schakowsky	Waters
Moore (KS)	Schiff	Watson
Moore (WI)	Schwartz	Watt
Moran (VA)	Scott (GA)	Waxman
Murphy (CT)	Scott (VA)	Weiner
Murphy, Patrick	Serrano	Welch (VT)
Murtha	Sestak	Wexler
Nadler	Shays	Wilson (OH)
Napolitano	Shea-Porter	Woolsey
Neal (MA)	Sherman	Wu
Oberstar	Shuler	Yarmuth

NOES—193

Aderholt	Flake	McCotter
Akin	Forbes	McCrery
Alexander	Fortenberry	McHenry
Bachmann	Fox	McHugh
Bachus	Franks (AZ)	McKeon
Barrett (SC)	Frelinghuysen	McMorris
Bartlett (MD)	Gallely	Rodgers
Barton (TX)	Garrett (NJ)	Mica
Biggart	Gerlach	Miller (FL)
Billbray	Gilchrest	Miller (MI)
Bilirakis	Gingrey	Miller, Gary
Bishop (UT)	Gohmert	Moran (KS)
Blackburn	Goode	Murphy, Tim
Blunt	Goodlatte	Musgrave
Boehner	Granger	Myrick
Bonner	Graves	Neugebauer
Bono Mack	Hall (TX)	Nunes
Boozman	Hastings (WA)	Paul
Boustany	Hayes	Pearce
Brady (TX)	Heller	Pence
Broun (GA)	Hensarling	Peterson (PA)
Brown (SC)	Herger	Petri
Buchanan	Hill	Pitts
Burgess	Hobson	Platts
Burton (IN)	Hoekstra	Poe
Buyer	Holden	Porter
Calvert	Hunter	Price (GA)
Camp (MI)	Inglis (SC)	Putnam
Campbell (CA)	Issa	Radanovich
Cannon	Johnson (IL)	Ramstad
Cantor	Johnson, Sam	Regula
Capito	Jones (NC)	Rehberg
Carter	Jordan	Reynolds
Chabot	Keller	Rogers (AL)
Childers	King (IA)	Rogers (KY)
Coble	King (NY)	Rogers (MI)
Cole (OK)	Kingston	Rohrabacher
Conaway	Kirk	Ros-Lehtinen
Crenshaw	Kline (MN)	Roskam
Cubin	Knollenberg	Royce
Culberson	Kuhl (NY)	Ryan (WI)
Davis (KY)	LaHood	Sali
Davis, David	Lamborn	Saxton
Davis, Tom	Lampson	Scalise
Deal (GA)	Latham	Schmidt
Dent	LaTourette	Sensenbrenner
Diaz-Balart, L.	Latta	Sessions
Diaz-Balart, M.	Lewis (CA)	Shadegg
Doolittle	Lewis (KY)	Shimkus
Drake	Linder	Shuster
Dreier	LoBiondo	Simpson
Duncan	Lucas	Smith (NE)
Ehlers	Lungren, Daniel	Smith (NJ)
Emerson	E.	Souder
English (PA)	Mack	Stearns
Everett	Manzullo	Sullivan
Fallin	Marchant	Tancred
Feeney	McCarthy (CA)	Terry
Ferguson	McCaul (TX)	Thornberry