

States are expected to face above-normal risks for significant wildfire events;

Whereas nearly 85 percent of wildland fires in the United States are caused by humans;

Whereas Federal wildfire suppression efforts cost over \$2,500,000,000 per year, and the total cost of wildfire damage across the United States is estimated to be tens to hundreds of billions of dollars per year;

Whereas significant investments in proactive planning, mitigation, and risk reduction are necessary for the United States to counteract increasingly severe wildfire risk, damage, and loss;

Whereas firefighters are on the front lines and are at an increased risk of developing cancer and respiratory diseases because they are exposed to smoke and hazardous chemicals in the line of duty;

Whereas the effects of long-term exposure to wildfire smoke will harm more people, as particulate pollution triggers asthma attacks, heart attacks, and strokes, and can kill;

Whereas preventative measures exist to help individuals and communities increase their fire resilience through—

(1) reducing the risk of home ignition by using fire-resistant construction materials and maintaining yard vegetation;

(2) community planning that reduces home wildfire exposure and increases access for firefighters;

(3) evacuation planning and assistance for people and their animals;

(4) vegetation and forest management; and

(5) limited use of combustibles during high heat or drier seasons, including fireworks, exhaust, and open flames; and

Whereas a nationally designated Wildfire Preparedness Month—

(1) increases awareness of the threat of wildfires and knowledge of lifesaving and fire mitigation practices; and

(2) promotes educational initiatives, encourages community programming, and increases overall knowledge and preparedness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the month of May 2025 as “National Wildfire Preparedness Month”;

(2) encourages increased awareness of, and preparedness for, the threat of wildfires and subsequent suppression efforts at the Federal, State, local, and Tribal levels of government, including Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian communities, and by non-governmental organizations and communities; and

(3) supports resources and educational initiatives that communicate how communities at risk of exposure to wildfire hazards can take preventative measures, including, home hardening, land management practices that reduce or remove highly flammable grasses and shrubs, instituting or enhancing early warning systems, reducing unplanned human ignitions, reducing adverse health impacts from smoke and fire exposure, and safely and efficiently evacuating people and their animals.

SENATE RESOLUTION 248—EXPRESSING THE NEED FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY FOR CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 248

Whereas the planet is facing an unprecedented biodiversity crisis, largely driven by human activity;

Whereas recent scientific studies have confirmed that human-driven activities are significantly damaging the ecosystems of the planet by—

(1) altering 75 percent of the area of terrestrial environments and 66 percent of marine environments;

(2) directly exploiting wildlife and plant species;

(3) accelerating climate change, directly harming nature and exacerbating other threats;

(4) polluting air, land, and water; and

(5) introducing invasive species;

Whereas recent scientific studies have shown that human-driven threats have harmed biodiversity by—

(1) threatening approximately 1,000,000 species with imminent or near extinction, including—

(A) more than 40 percent of amphibians;

(B) 33 percent of corals, sharks, shark relatives, and marine mammals;

(C) more than 60 percent of cycads and more than 30 percent of conifer trees; and

(D) approximately 10 percent of the more than 5,000,000 insect species on the planet; and

(2) causing population sizes of wild species to decline by—

(A) an average of 68 percent for species of mammals, birds, fish, amphibians, and reptiles;

(B) approximately 3,000,000,000 birds in North America since 1970;

(C) approximately 50 percent for species of live corals; and

(D) an average of more than 20 percent overall;

Whereas human activity is accelerating the decline of important economic and cultural services, including—

(1) land productivity, with a reduction in the productivity of approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the land surface;

(2) land and freshwater resources, with more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the land surface and 75 percent of freshwater resources devoted to crop or livestock production;

(3) global crops, with approximately \$500,000,000,000 of global crops at risk due to pollinator loss;

(4) marine fisheries, with $\frac{1}{2}$ of marine fisheries overfished, 60 percent fished at capacity, and only 7 percent fished below capacity; and

(5) environmental health, with 25 percent of greenhouse gas emissions caused by land clearing, crops, and fertilization;

Whereas the decline of biodiversity disproportionately impacts indigenous and other communities that rely on nature for essential services, including Native Americans and Alaska Natives, who offer unique perspectives and traditional ecological knowledge critical to preserving biodiversity;

Whereas the decline of biodiversity and ecosystem services observed worldwide is occurring in the United States;

Whereas the United States possesses an abundance and great diversity of species of fish, wildlife, and plants that are of significant value to the United States for intrinsic, aesthetic, ecological, educational, cultural, recreational, economic, and scientific reasons;

Whereas the decline of biodiversity presents a direct threat to the security, health, and well-being of the people of the United States by causing economic harm through the loss of valuable ecosystem services, including zoonotic disease buffering, polli-

nation, water filtration, soil replenishment, the provision of game species, medicinal products, and recreational opportunities;

Whereas communities of color, low-income communities, Tribal communities, and other populations that have been systematically and deliberately targeted for environmentally degrading activities and excluded from conservation efforts face disproportionate impacts from biodiversity loss;

Whereas Federal agencies are tasked with protecting and conserving biodiversity in the United States and worldwide through a variety of legal and policy channels;

Whereas there is no coordinating policy to maximize the effectiveness of the conservation efforts of the Federal Government and collaboration by the Federal Government with States, local governments, Indian Tribes, private landowners, and other non-governmental stakeholders;

Whereas the United States should play a leading role on the international stage in addressing the biodiversity crisis, yet the United States—

(1) is not a party to—

(A) the Convention on Biological Diversity, done at Rio de Janeiro June 5, 1992;

(B) the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (commonly known as “the Convention on Migratory Species”), done at Bonn November 6, 1979; or

(C) other relevant international agreements;

(2) does not issue a periodic national biodiversity outlook, contrary to most other countries; and

(3) does not have a national biodiversity strategy as part of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services; and

Whereas scientific research highlights essential pathways forward, including—

(1) establishing the effective conservation, restoration, and durable protection of not less than 30 percent of an ecologically representative area of the lands, freshwater, and oceans in the United States and in the world by 2030 by working collaboratively with governments, land owners, fishers, indigenous peoples, communities, and others;

(2) restoring or rewilding species and degraded habitats, and ensuring integrity and connectivity of protected areas;

(3) retaining and protecting highly intact ecosystems;

(4) reducing pesticide use to levels not higher than necessary for ecologically sustainable and safe food production; and

(5) addressing the threats posed by invasive species: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) it is in the national interest for the Federal Government to establish a national biodiversity strategy—

(A) to ensure the conservation and restoration of the biodiversity of the United States;

(B) to secure and restore the ecosystem services provided by nature for current and future generations;

(C) to deliver on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;

(D) to set ambitious, yet necessary, goals for protecting biodiversity in the coming decades;

(E) to promote social equity and justice in the conservation of the biodiversity of the United States;

(F) to coordinate the actions of Federal agencies to advance the conservation of biodiversity;

(G) to promote collaboration among Federal, State, and Tribal governments, non-governmental stakeholders, civil society, and international parties to advance conservation;

(H) to honor the Federal trust obligations to Indian Tribes and Native Americans; and

(I) to provide global leadership in addressing the biodiversity crisis; and

(2) the national biodiversity strategy described in paragraph (1) should include direction on—

(A) achieving the national goal of conserving not less than 30 percent of the land and waters of the United States to protect biodiversity and address climate change by 2030 (referred to in this resolution as “30x30”), supporting international efforts to achieve the same goal on a global scale, and setting other goals necessary to reduce the threats to biodiversity as indicated by the best available scientific information;

(B) taking action to protect threatened, endangered, and at-risk species from further imperilment or extinction;

(C) climate adaptation and mitigation strategies for biodiversity conservation, including—

(i) leading international agreements to combat climate change, including the decision of the 21st Conference of Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change adopted in Paris December 12, 2015 (commonly known as the “Paris Agreement”);

(ii) establishing climate refugia and climate corridors for conservation of species affected by climate change; and

(iii) the rapid build-out of renewable energy;

(D) reviewing existing laws, plans, programs, and strategies that are relevant to addressing threats to biodiversity to assess how the laws, plans, programs, and strategies can contribute to the objectives of this resolution and, as necessary, recommending new laws, plans, programs, and strategies;

(E) ensuring integration of biodiversity protection across the activities of the Federal Government, including foreign policy and foreign assistance;

(F) advancing conservation in collaboration with State and Tribal governments and on private lands through incentives, funding, technical support, and partnerships;

(G) incorporating indigenous knowledge and practices to support conservation and biodiversity, safeguarding the rights and needs of indigenous peoples, and ensuring fulfillment of the Federal trust obligations that apply to government decisionmaking that impacts the interests of Native Americans;

(H) ensuring equitable access to nature, inclusive decisionmaking on biodiversity protection, and just allocations of resources to achieve the goals of this resolution, including with respect to systematically and deliberately targeted populations such as communities of color, low-income communities, and Native American communities;

(I) establishing regular monitoring and reporting on the status of biodiversity in the United States and globally, including a quadrennial assessment reported to Congress and the people of the United States;

(J) prioritizing programs to identify knowledge gaps and accelerate research and development of new conservation solutions across sectors;

(K) assessing and integrating the role of the United States in international biodiversity, ecosystem services, and nature conservation in—

(i) national security and foreign policy strategies, including in international development policies, planning and finance, diplomatic dialogues, and trade agreements; and

(ii) advancing global adoption of and progress toward 30x30; and

(L) funding existing conservation programs, developing new funding sources, and reducing subsidies that harm biodiversity in

amounts commensurate with the scale of the harm to biodiversity.

SENATE RESOLUTION 249—EX-PRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE DESIGNATION OF MAY 2025 AS “MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH”

Mr. LUJÁN (for himself and Mr. DAINES) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 249

Whereas millions of people in the United States face mental health challenges and have unmet mental health needs;

Whereas, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, mental health disorders are chronic conditions, and, without proper diagnosis and treatment, children can face problems at home and in school, which can interfere with the future development of those children;

Whereas more resources should be dedicated in schools to the prevention, early detection, and treatment of mental health disorders in children;

Whereas childhood depression is more likely to persist into adulthood if it is left untreated;

Whereas it is important that the United States provides the necessary funding and resources to reach children and youth early on in life;

Whereas the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the use of digital technologies, such as social media;

Whereas there has been a great concern about the impact of social media on the mental health of children and youth;

Whereas social media exposes children to bullying, depression, anxiety, and self-harm;

Whereas there is a strong need to further understand and deter any negative impact of social media on children and youth;

Whereas suicide is a significant public health issue that can have an enduring impact on individuals and their communities;

Whereas additional resources should be dedicated to the prevention of suicide in the United States;

Whereas veterans are more likely to experience mental health challenges than civilians;

Whereas it is important that the United States provides additional funding and resources to support veterans with mental health needs; and

Whereas it would be appropriate to observe May 2025 as “Mental Health Awareness Month”; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the designation of May 2025 as “Mental Health Awareness Month” to remove the stigma associated with mental illness and place emphasis on scientific findings regarding mental health recovery;

(2) declares mental health a national priority;

(3) supports increasing access to mental health services;

(4) recognizes that mental well-being is equally as important as physical well-being for the citizens, communities, schools, businesses, and economy of the United States;

(5) applauds the coalescing of national, State, local, medical, and faith-based organizations in—

(A) working to promote public awareness of mental health; and

(B) providing critical information and support to individuals and families affected by mental illness; and

(6) encourages all individuals to draw on “Mental Health Awareness Month” as an opportunity to promote mental well-being and awareness, ensure access to appropriate coverage and services, and support overall quality of life for those living with mental illness.

SENATE RESOLUTION 250—RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT THE CHALLENGES OF CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM, AND ENCOURAGING CONGRESS TO IMPLEMENT POLICIES TO IMPROVE THE LIVES OF CHILDREN IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAPO, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. WARNER, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. KAINE, Mr. CORNYN, Mrs. CAPITO, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. HUSTED, Mrs. BRITT, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. YOUNG, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 250

Whereas National Foster Care Month was established more than 30 years ago—

(1) to bring foster care issues to the forefront;

(2) to highlight the importance of permanency for every child; and

(3) to recognize the essential role that foster parents, social workers, and advocates have in the lives of children in foster care throughout the United States;

Whereas all children deserve a safe, loving, and permanent home;

Whereas the primary goal of the foster care system is to ensure the safety and well-being of children while working to provide a safe, loving, and permanent home for each child;

Whereas there are approximately 368,530 children living in foster care in the United States;

Whereas there were approximately 186,602 youths that entered the foster care system in 2022 in the United States, while more than 108,877 youths were awaiting adoption at the end of 2022;

Whereas approximately 61,585 children entered foster care in 2022 due to parental drug abuse;

Whereas children of color are more likely to stay in the foster care system for longer periods of time and are less likely to be reunited with their biological families;

Whereas foster parents are the front-line caregivers for children who cannot safely remain with their biological parents, and foster parents provide physical care, emotional support, and education advocacy, and are the largest single source of families providing permanent homes for children leaving foster care to adoption;

Whereas children in foster care who are placed with relatives, compared to children placed with non-relatives—

(1) have more stability, including fewer changes in placements;

(2) have more positive perceptions of their placements;

(3) are more likely to be placed with their siblings; and

(4) demonstrate fewer behavioral problems;

Whereas some relative caregivers receive less financial assistance and support services than do foster caregivers;

Whereas an increased emphasis on prevention and reunification services is necessary