

“(3) **HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM.**—The term ‘harmful algal bloom’ means a high concentration of marine or freshwater algae (including diatoms), macroalgae (including Sargassum), or cyanobacteria resulting in nuisance conditions or harmful impacts on marine and freshwater ecosystems, subsistence resources, communities, or human health through the production of toxic compounds or other biological, chemical, or physical impacts of the bloom.”;

(3) by striking paragraph (9);

(4) by redesignating paragraphs (4), (5), (6), (7), and (8) as paragraphs (5), (8), (9), (11), and (13), respectively;

(5) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) **HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA EVENT.**—The term ‘harmful algal bloom and hypoxia event’ means the occurrence of a harmful algal bloom or hypoxia as a result of a natural, anthropogenic, or undetermined cause.”;

(6) in paragraph (5), as redesignated by paragraph (4)—

(A) by striking “aquatic” and inserting “marine or freshwater”; and

(B) by striking “resident” and inserting “marine or freshwater”;

(7) by inserting after paragraph (5), as redesignated by paragraph (4), the following:

“(6) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term ‘Indian tribe’ has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(7) **NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.**—The term ‘Native Hawaiian organization’ has the meaning given that term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517) and includes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.”;

(8) by inserting after paragraph (9), as redesignated by paragraph (4), the following:

“(10) **SUBSISTENCE USE.**—The term ‘subsistence use’ means the customary and traditional use of fish, wildlife, or other freshwater, coastal, or marine resources by any individual or community to meet personal or family needs, including essential economic, nutritional, or cultural applications.”; and

(9) by inserting after paragraph (11), as redesignated by paragraph (4), the following:

“(12) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.**—The term ‘Tribal organization’ has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).”.

(h) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—Section 610 of the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 (33 U.S.C. 4009) is amended—

(1) by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

“(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title, for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030—

“(1) \$19,500,000 to the Under Secretary; and

“(2) \$8,000,000 to the Administrator.”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) **TRANSFER AUTHORITY.**—As specifically provided in advance in appropriations Acts, the Under Secretary or the Administrator may transfer funds made available to carry out this title to the head of any Federal department or agency, with the concurrence of such head, to carry out, as appropriate, relevant provisions of this title and section 9(g) of the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2018 (33 U.S.C. 4010).”.

SEC. 3. OTHER HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM AND HYPOXIA MATTERS.

Section 9(g) of the National Integrated Drought Information System Reauthorization Act of 2018 (33 U.S.C. 4010) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by adding at the end the following new sentence: “The appropriate Federal official may waive the non-Federal share requirements of the preceding sentence if such official determines no reasonable means are available through which the recipient of the Federal share can meet the non-Federal share requirement.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) **CONTRACT, COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT, AND GRANT AUTHORITY.**—The appropriate Federal official may enter into contracts, cooperative agreements, and grants with States, Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations, local governments, or other entities to pay for or reimburse costs incurred by such entities for the purposes of supporting the determination of, and assessing the environmental, economic, subsistence use, and public health effects of, an event of national significance.”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “a leadership official of an affected Indian Tribe, the executive official of the District of Columbia, or the executive official of an affected territory or possession of the United States,” after “State,”; and

(B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “consider” and all that follows through “boundary.” and inserting “consider factors such as—

“(i) the risk to public health and the potential severity of the detrimental environmental effects of the hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, as indicated by—

“(I) data on shellfish or water quality obtained through sampling programs, including baseline data, and regulatory or advisory thresholds established to explain management actions related to the event;

“(II) toxin levels in fish, marine mammals, seabirds, shellfish, or water during the event;

“(III) toxic aerosols produced during the event, including potential human exposures to toxic aerosols;

“(IV) reports of human or animal illnesses or mortalities during the event;

“(V) any closures of fishing or shellfish harvesting locations or recreational public waters, including beaches, during the event;

“(VI) the duration and spatial extent of the event; or

“(VII) impacts to habitats or ecosystems associated with the event;

“(i) the potential economic, food safety and security, and subsistence impacts associated with the hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, including to fisheries and aquaculture, recreation and tourism, monitoring and management, resource use, and event response activities, assessed in comparison with historical data from when a State or region did not experience such an event, as possible, as indicated by—

“(I) increases in public health expenditures;

“(II) losses to commercial fisheries and aquaculture industries, recreation and tourism, real estate, and other impacted industries or businesses;

“(III) increases in monitoring and management expenditures, including costs incurred for event response and clean-up (such as for beach clean-up following an influx of biomass or a fish-kill) by public or private sectors; or

“(IV) impacts to subsistence resources, including nutritional, resource use, and economic effects on subsistence communities;

“(iii) the relative magnitude of those impacts in relation to past occurrences of hypoxia or harmful algal bloom events that occur on a recurrent or annual basis; and

“(iv) the geographic scope of the hypoxia or harmful algal bloom event, including the potential of the event to affect several mu-

nicipalities, to affect more than 1 State, or to cross an international boundary.”;

(3) in paragraph (3), by adding at the end the following:

“(D) **INDIAN TRIBE.**—The term ‘Indian Tribe’ has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

“(E) **NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.**—The term ‘Native Hawaiian organization’ has the meaning given that term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517) and includes the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

“(F) **SUBSISTENCE USE.**—The term ‘subsistence use’ means the customary and traditional use of fish, wildlife, or other freshwater, coastal, or marine resources by any individual or community to meet personal or family needs, including essential economic, nutritional, or cultural applications.

“(G) **TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.**—The term ‘Tribal organization’ has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) **AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030, to remain available until expended.”.

The committee-reported title amendment was agreed to as follows:

Amend the title so as to read: “A bill to amend the Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998 to address harmful algal blooms, and for other purposes.”.

The title, as amended, was agreed to.

FIRE READY NATION ACT OF 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 119, S. 306.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 306) to establish and maintain a coordinated program within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that improves wildfire, fire weather, fire risk, and wildfire smoke related forecasting, detection, modeling, observations, and service delivery, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (S. 306) was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, was read the third time, and passed as follows:

S. 306

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This Act may be cited as the “Fire Ready Nation Act of 2025”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Definitions.
- Sec. 3. Establishment of fire weather services program.
- Sec. 4. Fire weather testbed.
- Sec. 5. Data management and technology modernization.
- Sec. 6. Surveys and assessments.
- Sec. 7. Incident Meteorologist Service.
- Sec. 8. Emergency response activities.
- Sec. 9. Submissions to Congress regarding the fire weather services program, incident meteorologist workforce needs, and National Weather Service workforce support.
- Sec. 10. Fire Science and Technology Working Group; strategic plan.
- Sec. 11. Fire weather rating system.
- Sec. 12. Government Accountability Office reports.
- Sec. 13. Cooperation and coordination.
- Sec. 14. General provisions.
- Sec. 15. Authorization of appropriations.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMINISTRATION.—The term “Administration” means the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(2) APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “appropriate committees of Congress” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives.

(3) EARTH SYSTEM MODEL.—The term “Earth system model” means a mathematical model containing all relevant components of the Earth, namely the atmosphere, oceans, land, cryosphere, and biosphere.

(4) FIRE ENVIRONMENT.—The term “fire environment” means—

(A) the environmental conditions, such as soil moisture, vegetation, topography, snowpack, atmospheric temperature, moisture, and wind, that influence—

(i) fuel and fire behavior; and

(ii) the emission, chemical evolution, and transport of wildfire smoke; and

(B) the associated environmental impacts occurring during and after fire events.

(5) FIRE WEATHER.—The term “fire weather” means the weather conditions that influence the start, spread, character, or behavior of wildfires and relevant meteorological and chemical phenomena, including air quality, wildfire smoke, and meteorological parameters such as relative humidity, air temperature, wind speed and direction, and atmospheric composition and chemistry, including emissions and mixing heights.

(6) IMPACT-BASED DECISION SUPPORT SERVICES.—The term “impact-based decision support services” means scientific advice and interpretative services the Administration provides to help core partners, such as emergency personnel and public safety officials, make decisions when the information impacts the lives and livelihoods of the people of the United States.

(7) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian tribe” has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(8) NATIVE HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATION.—The term “Native Hawaiian organization” has the meaning given that term in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517), including the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

(9) SEASONAL.—The term “seasonal” has the meaning given that term in section 2 of

the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8501).

(10) STATE.—The term “State” means a State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the United State Virgin Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Republic of Palau.

(11) TRIBAL ORGANIZATION.—The term “Tribal organization” has the meaning given that term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

(12) UNDER SECRETARY.—The term “Under Secretary” means the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere.

SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRE WEATHER SERVICES PROGRAM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall establish and maintain a coordinated fire weather services program among the offices of the Administration in existence as of the date of the enactment of this Act.

(b) PROGRAM FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the program established under subsection (a), consistent with the priorities described in section 101 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8511), shall be—

(1) to support readiness, responsiveness, understanding, and resilience of the United States to wildfires, fire weather, wildfire smoke, post-fire flooding and debris flows, and associated hazards and impacts in built and natural environments;

(2) to collaboratively develop and disseminate accurate, precise, effective, and timely risk communications, forecasts, watches, and warnings relating to wildfires, fire weather, wildfire smoke, post-fire flooding and debris flows, and other associated conditions, hazards, and impacts, as applicable, with Federal land management agencies;

(3) to partner with and support the public, Federal and State government entities, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, and academic and local partners through the development of capabilities, impact-based decision support services, and overall service delivery and utility related to fire weather;

(4) to conduct and support research and development of new and innovative models, technologies, techniques, products, systems, processes, and procedures to predict and improve understanding of wildfires, fire weather, related air quality, post-fire flooding and debris flows, and the fire environment;

(5) to develop processes to transition research into operational use and inform additional areas of research to deliver fire weather products, services, and decision support tools to operational users and platforms;

(6) to develop communications networks and strategies to ensure parity of fire forecasts, warning services, and information about current fire location, for remote, isolated, and rural communities, including communities where the public acts as the first responder to wildfire; and

(7) to develop, in coordination with Federal land management agencies, impact-based decision support services that operationalize and integrate the functions described in paragraphs (1) through (6) in order to provide comprehensive impact-based decision support services that encompass the fire environment.

(c) PROGRAM PRIORITIES.—In developing and implementing the program established under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall prioritize—

(1) development of a fire weather-enabled Earth system model and data assimilation systems that—

(A) are capable of prediction and forecasting across relevant spatial and temporal scales;

(B) include variables associated with fire weather and the fire environment;

(C) improve understanding of the connections between fire weather and modes of climate variability;

(D) incorporate emerging techniques such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and cloud computing; and

(E) use a rapidly deployable network of rain gauges for post-fire hazard monitoring;

(2) advancement of existing and new observational capabilities, including satellite-, airborne-, air-, and ground-based systems and technologies, and social networking and other public information-gathering applications that—

(A) identify—

(i) high-risk pre-ignition conditions;

(ii) conditions that influence fire behavior and spread including those conditions that suppress active fire events; and

(iii) fire weather threat levels;

(B) support real-time notification and monitoring of ignitions;

(C) support observations and data collection of fire weather and fire environment variables, including vegetation state and profiles of wildfire smoke, winds, temperature, and humidity, for development of the model and systems under paragraph (1); and

(D) support forecasts and research that mitigate the impacts of wildfires on human life, health, and the economy;

(3) development and implementation of advanced and user-oriented impact-based decision tools, science, and technologies that—

(A) ensure real-time and retrospective data, products, and services are findable, accessible, interoperable, usable, inform further research, and are analysis- and decision-ready;

(B) provide targeted information throughout the fire lifecycle including pre-ignition, detection, forecasting, post-fire, and monitoring phases; and

(C) support early assessment of post-fire hazards, such as air quality, debris flows, mudslides, and flooding; and

(4) ensuring the parity of access to and support from the tools, science, and technologies developed under this subsection for remote, isolated, and rural communities.

(d) PROGRAM ACTIVITIES.—In developing and implementing the program established under subsection (a), the Under Secretary may—

(1) conduct relevant physical and social science research activities in support of the functions described in subsection (b) and the priorities described in subsection (c);

(2) conduct relevant activities, in coordination with Federal land management agencies and Federal science agencies, to assess fuel characteristics, including moisture, loading, and other parameters used to determine fire risk levels and outlooks;

(3) support and conduct research that assesses impacts to marine, riverine, watershed, and other relevant ecosystems, which may include forest and rangeland ecosystems, resulting from activities associated with mitigation of and response to wildfires;

(4) support and conduct attribution science research relating to wildfires, fire weather, fire risk, wildfire smoke, and associated conditions, risks, and impacts;

(5) develop wildfire smoke and air quality forecasts, forecast guidance, and prescribed burn weather forecasts, and conduct research on the impact of such forecasts on response behavior that minimizes health-related impacts from wildfire smoke exposure;

(6) use, in coordination with Federal land management agencies, wildland fuels information and fire resource intelligence to inform fire environment impact-based decision support services and products for safety;

(7) work with Federal agencies to provide data, tools, and services to support the implementation of mitigation measures by such agencies;

(8) provide training and support to ensure effective media utilization of impact-based decision support services and products to the public regarding actions needing to be taken;

(9) provide comprehensive training to ensure staff of the program established under subsection (a) is properly equipped to deliver the impact-based decision support services and products described in paragraphs (1) through (6); and

(10) acquire, through contracted purchase, private sector-produced observational data to fill identified gaps, as needed.

(e) **PARITY FOR REMOTE, ISOLATED, AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.**—In developing and implementing the program established under subsection (a), the Under Secretary shall ensure parity of coverage and programmatic activity for remote, isolated, and rural communities, including communities where the public acts as the first responder to wildfire.

(f) **COLLABORATION.**—The Under Secretary shall, as the Under Secretary considers appropriate, collaborate with partners in the weather and climate enterprises, academic institutions, States, Indian tribes, Tribal organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations, local partners, and Federal agencies in the development and implementation of the program established under subsection (a).

(g) **AGREEMENTS.**—In carrying out the activities under this Act and the amendments made by this Act, the Under Secretary may provide support to non-Federal entities by making funds and resources available through—

(1) competitive grants;

(2) contracts under the mobility program under subchapter VI of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Intergovernmental Personnel Act Mobility Program”);

(3) cooperative agreements; and

(4) co-location agreements as described in section 502 of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps Amendments Act of 2020 (33 U.S.C. 851 note prec.).

(h) **PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION PLAN.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a plan that details how the program established under subsection (a) will be administered and governed within the Administration.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The plan required by paragraph (1) should include a description of—

(A) how the functions described in subsection (b), the priorities described in subsection (c), and the activities described in subsection (d) will be distributed among the line offices of the Administration; and

(B) the mechanisms in place to ensure seamless coordination among those offices.

SEC. 4. FIRE WEATHER TESTBED.

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRE WEATHER TESTBED.**—The Under Secretary shall establish a fire weather testbed that enables engagement across the Federal Government, State and local governments, academia, private and federally funded research laboratories, the private sector, and end-users in order to evaluate the accuracy and usability of technology, models, fire weather products and services, and other research to accelerate the implementation, transition to operations, and use of new capabilities by the

Administration, Federal and land management agencies, and other relevant stakeholders.

(b) **UNCREWED SYSTEMS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Under Secretary shall—

(A) establish and carry out a research and development program to support the application of uncrewed systems technologies to improve data collection in support of modeling, observations, predictions, forecasts, and impact-based decision support services, and for other purposes of the Administration;

(B) transition uncrewed systems technologies from research to operations as the Under Secretary considers appropriate; and

(C) coordinate with other Federal agencies that may be developing uncrewed systems and related technologies to meet the challenges of wildland fire management.

(2) **PILOTS REQUIRED.**—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall conduct pilots of uncrewed systems for fire weather and fire environment observations, including—

(A) testing of uncrewed systems in approximations of real-world scenarios;

(B) assessment of the utility of meteorological data collected from fire response and assessment aircraft;

(C) input of the collected data into appropriate models to predict fire behavior, including coupled atmosphere and fire models; and

(D) collection of best management practices for deployment of uncrewed systems and other remote data technology, including for communication and coordination between the stakeholders described in subsection (a).

(3) **SAVINGS CLAUSE.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out activities under this subsection, the Under Secretary shall ensure that any testing or deployment of uncrewed systems follow procedures, restrictions, and protocols established by the heads of the Federal agencies with statutory or regulatory jurisdiction over any airspace in which wildfire response activities are conducted during an active wildfire event.

(B) **CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION.**—The Under Secretary shall consult and coordinate with relevant Federal land management agencies, Federal science agencies, and the Federal Aviation Administration to develop processes for the appropriate deployment of the systems described in subparagraph (A).

(c) **ADDITIONAL PILOT PROJECTS.**—The Under Secretary shall establish additional pilot projects relating to the fire weather testbed that may include the following elements:

(1) Advanced products to detect fire from satellites.

(2) Procurement and use of commercial data.

(3) Investigation and evaluation of information needs of users and decision makers.

(d) **REPORT.**—Section 108(a)(5) of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Authorization Act of 1992 (15 U.S.C. 8520(a)(5)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (C), by adding “and” at the end; and

(2) in subparagraph (D)—

(A) in clause (ii), by striking “and”;

(B) in clause (iii), by adding “and” at the end; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(iv) a description of the research that has been transitioned into operations, including research at the fire weather testbed established under section 4(a) of the Fire Ready Nation Act of 2025.”.

SEC. 5. DATA MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION.

(a) **DATA AVAILABILITY AND MANAGEMENT.**—Section 301 of the Weather Research and

Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8531) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (f) and (g) as subsections (g) and (h), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after subsection (e) the following:

“(f) **DATA AVAILABILITY AND MANAGEMENT.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Under Secretary shall—

“(A) make data and metadata generated or collected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that the Under Secretary has the legal right to redistribute fully and openly available, in accordance with chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, and the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-435; 132 Stat. 5529) and the amendments made by that Act, and preserve and curate such data and metadata, in accordance with chapter 31 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Federal Records Act of 1950’), in order to maximize use of such data and metadata; and

“(B) manage and steward the access, archival, and retrieval activities for the data and metadata described in subparagraph (A) by—

“(i) using—

“(I) enterprise-wide infrastructure, emerging technologies, commercial partnerships, and the skilled workforce needed to provide appropriate data management from collection to broad access; and

“(II) associated information services; and

“(ii) pursuing the maximum interoperability of data and information by—

“(I) leveraging data, information, knowledge, and tools from across the Federal Government to support equitable access, cross-sectoral collaboration and innovation, and local planning and decision-making; and

“(II) developing standards and practices for the adoption and citation of digital object identifiers for datasets, models, and analytical tools.

“(2) **COLLABORATION.**—In carrying out this subsection, the Under Secretary shall collaborate with such Federal partners and stakeholders as the Under Secretary considers relevant—

“(A) to develop standards to pursue maximum interoperability of data, information, knowledge, and tools across the Federal Government, convert historical records into common digital formats, and improve access and usability of data by partners and stakeholders;

“(B) to identify and solicit relevant data from Federal and international partners and other relevant stakeholders, as the Under Secretary considers appropriate; and

“(C) to develop standards and practices for the adoption and citation of digital object identifiers for datasets, models, and analytical tools.”.

(b) **WILDFIRE TECHNOLOGY MODERNIZATION.**—Section 1114 of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (43 U.S.C. 1748b-1) is amended—

(1) in subsection (c)(3), by inserting “the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration,” after “Federal Aviation Administration.”;

(2) in subsection (e)(2)—

(A) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(B) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following:

“(B) **CONSULTATION.**—

“(i) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretaries shall consult with the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere regarding any development of impact-based decision support services that relate to wildfire-related activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

“(ii) DEFINITION OF IMPACT-BASED DECISION SUPPORT SERVICES.—In this subparagraph, the term ‘impact-based decision support services’ means scientific advice and interpretative services the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration provides to help core partners, such as emergency personnel and public safety officials, make decisions when the information impacts the lives and livelihoods of the people of the United States.”; and

(3) in subsection (f)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) and (2) as subparagraphs (A) and (B), respectively, and moving such subparagraphs, as so redesignated, 2 ems to the right;

(B) by striking “The Secretaries” and inserting the following:

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretaries shall collaborate with the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere to improve coordination, utility of systems and assets, and interoperability of data for wildfire smoke prediction, forecasting, and modeling.”.

(C) DIGITAL PRESENCE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall develop and maintain a comprehensive, centralized, and publicly accessible digital presence designed to promote findability, accessibility, interoperability, usability, and utility of the services, tools, data, and information produced by the program established under section 3(a).

(2) DIGITAL PLATFORM AND TOOLS.—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall seek to ensure the digital platform and tools of the Administration integrate geospatial data, decision support tools, training, and best practices to provide real-time fire weather forecasts and address fire-related issues and needs.

(d) HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall seek to acquire sufficient high-performance computing resources and capacity for research, operations, and data storage in support of the program established under section 3(a).

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In acquiring high-performance computing capacity under paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall consider requirements needed for—

(A) conducting research, development, and testbed experiments;

(B) the transition of research and testbed developments into operations;

(C) sustaining capabilities in operations;

(D) capabilities existing in other Federal agencies and the commercial sector; and

(E) skilled workforce development.

SEC. 6. SURVEYS AND ASSESSMENTS.

(a) POST-FIRE WEATHER SURVEYS AND ASSESSMENTS.—

(1) ANNUAL POST-FIRE-WEATHER-SEASON SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—During the second winter following the date of the enactment of this Act, and each year thereafter, the Under Secretary shall conduct a post-fire-weather-season survey and assessment.

(B) ELEMENTS.—After conducting a post-fire-weather-season survey and assessment under subparagraph (A), the Under Secretary shall—

(i) investigate any gaps in weather data collected during the assessment;

(ii) identify and implement strategies and procedures to improve program services and information dissemination;

(iii) update systems, processes, strategies, and procedures to enhance the efficiency and reliability of weather data obtained from the assessment;

(iv) evaluate the accuracy and efficacy of physical fire weather forecasting informa-

tion for each incident included in the survey and assessment; and

(v) assess and refine performance measures, as needed.

(2) SURVEYS AND ASSESSMENTS FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL WILDFIRE EVENTS.—The Under Secretary may conduct surveys and assessments following individual wildfire events as the Under Secretary determines necessary.

(3) GOAL.—In carrying out activities under this subsection, the Under Secretary shall seek to increase the number of post-wildfire community impact studies, including by surveying individual and collective responses and incorporating other applicable topics of social science research.

(4) ANNUAL BRIEFING.—Not less frequently than once each year, the Under Secretary shall join other relevant agencies to provide a briefing to the appropriate committees of Congress that provides—

(A) an overview of the fire season;

(B) an outlook for the fire season; and

(C) fire weather forecasts.

(5) COORDINATION.—In conducting any survey or assessment under this subsection, the Under Secretary shall coordinate with Federal, State, and local partners, Indian tribes, Native Hawaiian organizations, private entities, and such institutions of higher education as the Under Secretary considers relevant in order to—

(A) improve operations and collaboration; and

(B) optimize data collection, sharing, integration, assimilation, and dissemination.

(6) DATA AVAILABILITY.—The Under Secretary shall make the data and findings obtained from each assessment conducted under this subsection available to the public in an accessible digital format as soon as practicable after conducting the assessment.

(7) SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS.—The Under Secretary shall make best efforts to incorporate the results and recommendations of each assessment conducted under this subsection into the research and development plan and operations of the Administration.

(b) JOINT ASSESSMENT AND PLAN FOR AUTOMATED SURFACE OBSERVING SYSTEM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Secretary of Defense, shall—

(A) conduct an assessment of resources, personnel, procedures, and activities necessary to maximize the functionality and utility of the automated surface observing system of the United States that identifies—

(i) key system upgrades needed to improve observation quality and utility for weather forecasting, aviation safety, and other users;

(ii) improvements needed in observations within the planetary boundary layer, including mixing height;

(iii) improvements needed in public accessibility of observational data;

(iv) improvements needed to reduce latency in reporting of observational data;

(v) relevant data to be collected for the production of forecasts or forecast guidance relating to atmospheric composition, including particulate and air quality data related to wildfires, and aviation safety;

(vi) areas of concern regarding operational continuity and reliability of the system, which may include needs for on-night staff, particularly in remote and rural areas and areas where system failure would have the greatest negative impact to the community;

(vii) stewardship, data handling, data distribution, and product generation needs arising from upgrading and changing the automated surface observation systems;

(viii) possible solutions for areas of concern identified under clause (vi), including with respect to the potential use of backup systems, power and communication system

reliability, staffing needs and personnel location, and the acquisition of critical component backups and proper storage location to ensure rapid system repair necessary to ensure system operational continuity; and

(ix) research, development, and transition to operations needed to develop advanced data collection, quality control, and distribution so that the data are provided to models, users, and decision support systems in a timely manner; and

(B) develop and implement a plan that addresses the findings of the assessment conducted under subparagraph (A), including by seeking and allocating resources necessary to ensure that system upgrades are standardized across the Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Department of Defense to the extent practicable.

(2) STANDARDIZATION.—Any system standardization implemented under paragraph (1)(B) shall not impede activities to upgrade or improve individual units of the system.

(3) REMOTE AUTOMATIC WEATHER STATION COORDINATION.—The Under Secretary, in collaboration with relevant Federal agencies and the National Interagency Coordination Center, shall assess and develop cooperative agreements to improve coordination, interoperability standards, operations, and placement of remote automatic weather stations for the purpose of improving utility and coverage of remote automatic weather stations, automated surface observation systems, wildfire smoke monitoring platforms, and other similar stations and systems for weather and climate operations.

(4) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary, in collaboration with the Administrator of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Secretary of Defense, shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report that—

(i) details the findings of the assessment required by subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1); and

(ii) the plan required by subparagraph (B) of such paragraph.

(B) ELEMENTS.—The report required by subparagraph (A) shall include a detailed assessment of appropriations required—

(i) to address the findings of the assessment required by subparagraph (A) of paragraph (1); and

(ii) to implement the plan required by subparagraph (B) of such paragraph.

SEC. 7. INCIDENT METEOROLOGIST SERVICE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Under Secretary shall establish and maintain an Incident Meteorologist Service within the National Weather Service (in this section referred to as the “Service”).

(b) INCLUSION OF EXISTING INCIDENT METEOROLOGISTS.—The Service shall include—

(1) the incident meteorologists of the Administration as of the date of the enactment of this Act; and

(2) such incident meteorologists of the Administration as may be appointed after such date.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—The Service shall provide—

(1) on-site impact-based decision support services to Federal, State, and local government emergency response agencies, Indian tribes, and Native Hawaiian organizations preceding, during, and following significant weather-related events, such as wildland fires, that threaten human life, property, or the economy; and

(2) support to Federal, State, and local government decision makers, partners, and stakeholders, Indian tribes, Tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations for seasonal planning and pre-fire mitigation activities.

(d) **DEPLOYMENT.**—The Service shall be deployed—

(1) as determined by the Under Secretary; or

(2) at the request of the head of another Federal agency and with the approval of the Under Secretary.

(e) **STAFFING AND RESOURCES.**—In establishing and maintaining the Service, the Under Secretary shall identify, acquire, and maintain adequate levels of staffing and resources to meet user needs.

(f) **SUPPORT FOR INCIDENT METEOROLOGISTS.**—The Under Secretary shall provide resources, access to real-time fire weather forecasts, training, administrative and logistical support, and access to professional counseling or other forms of support as the Under Secretary considers appropriate for the betterment of the emotional and mental health and well-being of incident meteorologists and other employees of the Administration so long as the need for such resources, training, access, or support is due to the response of such employees to high-impact and extreme fire weather events.

SEC. 8. EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACTIVITIES.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **BASIC PAY.**—The term “basic pay” includes any applicable locality-based comparability payment under section 5304 of title 5, United States Code, any applicable special rate supplement under section 5305 of such title, or any equivalent payment under a similar provision of law.

(2) **COVERED EMPLOYEE.**—The term “covered employee” means an employee of the Department of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture, or the Department of the Interior.

(3) **COVERED SERVICES.**—The term “covered services” means services that are performed by a covered employee while serving—

(A) as a wildland firefighter or a fire management response official, including a regional fire director, a deputy regional fire director, and a fire management officer;

(B) as an incident meteorologist accompanying a wildland firefighter crew; or

(C) on an incident management team, at the National Interagency Fire Center, at a Geographic Area Coordinating Center, or at an operations center.

(4) **PREMIUM PAY.**—The term “premium pay” means premium pay paid under a provision of law described in the matter preceding paragraph (1) of section 5547(a) of title 5, United States Code.

(5) **RELEVANT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.**—The term “relevant congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate;

(D) the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(E) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate;

(F) the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the House of Representatives;

(G) the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives;

(H) the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives;

(I) the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representative; and

(J) the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

(6) **SECRETARY CONCERNED.**—The term “Secretary concerned” means—

(A) the Secretary of Commerce, with respect to an employee of the Department of Commerce;

(B) the Secretary of Agriculture, with respect to an employee of the Department of Agriculture; and

(C) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to an employee of the Department of the Interior.

(b) **WAIVER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Any premium pay received by a covered employee for covered services shall be disregarded in calculating the aggregate of the basic pay and premium pay for the covered employee for purposes of applying the limitation on premium pay under section 5547(a) of title 5, United States Code.

(2) **CALCULATION OF AGGREGATE PAY.**—Any pay that is disregarded under paragraph (1) shall be disregarded in calculating the aggregate pay of the applicable covered employee for purposes of applying the limitation under section 5307 of title 5, United States Code, during calendar year 2025.

(3) **LIMITATION.**—A covered employee may not be paid premium pay under this subsection if, or to the extent that, the aggregate of the basic pay and premium pay (including premium pay for covered services) of the covered employee for a calendar year would exceed the rate of basic pay payable for a position at level II of the Executive Schedule under section 5313 of title 5, United States Code, as in effect at the end of that calendar year.

(4) **TREATMENT OF ADDITIONAL PREMIUM PAY.**—If the application of this subsection results in the payment of additional premium pay to a covered employee of a type that is normally creditable as basic pay for retirement or any other purpose, that additional premium pay shall not be—

(A) considered to be basic pay of the covered employee for any purpose; or

(B) used in computing a lump-sum payment to the covered employee for accumulated and accrued annual leave under section 5551 or 5552 of title 5, United States Code.

(5) **EFFECTIVE PERIOD.**—This subsection shall be in effect during calendar year 2025 and apply to premium pay payable during that year.

(c) **AMENDMENT.**—Section 5542(a)(5) of title 5, United States Code, is amended by inserting “, the Department of Commerce,” after “Interior”.

(d) **PLAN TO ADDRESS NEEDS.**—

(1) **DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than March 30, 2026, the Secretaries referred to in subsection (a)(6), in consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Director of the Office of Personnel Management, shall jointly develop and implement a plan that addresses the needs of the Department of Commerce, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of the Interior, as applicable, to hire, appoint, promote, or train additional covered employees who carry out covered services such that sufficient covered employees are available throughout each fiscal year, beginning in fiscal year 2026, without the need for waivers of premium pay limitations.

(2) **SUBMITTAL.**—Not later than 30 days before the date on which the Secretaries implement the plan developed under paragraph (1), the Secretaries shall submit the plan to the relevant congressional committees.

(3) **LIMITATION.**—The plan developed under paragraph (1) shall not be contingent on any Secretary receiving amounts appropriated for fiscal years beginning in fiscal year 2026 in amounts greater than amounts appropriated for fiscal year 2024.

(e) **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELL-BEING.**—The Secretary concerned shall maintain policies and procedures to promote the health, safety, and well-being of covered employees.

SEC. 9. SUBMISSIONS TO CONGRESS REGARDING THE FIRE WEATHER SERVICES PROGRAM, INCIDENT METEOROLOGIST WORKFORCE NEEDS, AND NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WORKFORCE SUPPORT.

(a) **REPORT TO CONGRESS.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress—

(1) the plan described in subsection (b);

(2) the assessment described in subsection (c); and

(3) the assessment described in subsection (d).

(b) **FIRE WEATHER SERVICES PROGRAM PLAN.**—

(1) **ELEMENTS.**—The plan submitted under subsection (a)(1) shall detail—

(A) the observational data, modeling requirements, ongoing computational needs, research, development, and technology transfer activities, data management, skilled-personnel requirements, engagement with relevant Federal emergency and land management agencies and partners, and corresponding research, development, and operational resources and timelines necessary to achieve the functions described in subsection (b) of section 3 and the priorities described in subsection (c) of such section; and

(B) plans and needs for all other activities and requirements under this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(2) **SUBMITTAL OF ANNUAL BUDGET FOR PLAN.**—Following completion of the plan submitted under subsection (a)(1), the Under Secretary shall, not less frequently than once each year concurrent with the submission of the budget by the President to Congress under section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, submit to Congress a proposed budget corresponding with the elements detailed in the plan.

(c) **INCIDENT METEOROLOGIST WORKFORCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Under Secretary shall conduct a workforce needs assessment on the current and future demand for additional incident meteorologists for wildfires and other high-impact fire weather events.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The assessment required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of staffing levels as of the date on which the assessment is submitted under subsection (a)(2) and projected future staffing levels.

(B) An assessment of the state of the research, development, and operational infrastructure of the National Weather Service as of the date on which the assessment is submitted and future needs of such infrastructure in order to meet current and future demands, including with respect to information technology support and logistical and administrative operations.

(3) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In conducting the assessment required by paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall consider user needs and feedback from relevant stakeholders.

(d) **SUPPORT SERVICES ASSESSMENT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Under Secretary shall conduct a workforce support services assessment with respect to employees of the National Weather Service engaged in emergency response.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The assessment required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) An assessment of need for further support of employees of the National Weather Service engaged in emergency response through services provided by the Public Health Service.

(B) A detailed assessment of appropriations required to secure the level of support services needed as identified in the assessment described in subparagraph (A).

(3) ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES.—Following the completion of the assessment required by paragraph (1), the Under Secretary shall seek to acquire additional support services to meet the needs identified in the assessment.

SEC. 10. FIRE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP; STRATEGIC PLAN.

(a) FIRE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WORKING GROUP.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Executive Director of the Interagency Committee for Advancing Weather Services established under section 402 of the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017 (15 U.S.C. 8542) (in this section referred to as the “Interagency Committee”) shall establish a working group, to be known as the “Fire Science and Technology Working Group” (in this section referred to as the “Working Group”).

(2) CHAIR.—The Working Group shall be chaired by the Under Secretary, or designee.

(3) GENERAL DUTIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Working Group shall seek to build efficiencies among the agencies listed under section 12(c)(1) and coordinate the planning and management of science, research, technology, and operations related to science and support services for wildland fire prediction, detection, forecasting, modeling, resilience, response, management, and assessments.

(B) INPUT.—The Working Group shall solicit input from non-Federal stakeholders.

(b) STRATEGIC PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Interagency Committee shall prepare and submit to Congress a strategic plan for interagency coordination, research, and development that will improve the assessment of fire environments and the understanding and prediction of wildland fires, associated wildfire smoke, and the impacts of such fires and smoke, including—

(A) on communities, buildings, and other infrastructure;

(B) on ecosystem services and watersheds;

(C) social and economic impacts;

(D) by developing and encouraging the adoption of science-based and cost-effective measures—

(i) to enhance community resilience to wildland fires;

(ii) to address and mitigate the impacts of wildland fires and associated wildfire smoke; and

(iii) to restore natural fire regimes in fire-dependent ecosystems;

(E) by improving the understanding and mitigation of the effects of weather and long-term drought on wildland fire risk, frequency, and severity;

(F) through integrations of social and behavioral sciences in public safety fire communication;

(G) by improving the forecasting and understanding of prescribed fires and the impacts of such fires, and how those impacts may differ from impacts of wildland fires that originate from an unplanned ignition; and

(H) consideration and adoption of any recommendations included in the report required by section 12(c).

(2) PLAN ELEMENTS.—The strategic plan required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

(A) A description of the priorities and needs of vulnerable populations.

(B) A description of high-performance computing, visualization, and dissemination needs.

(C) A timeline and guidance for implementation of—

(i) an interagency data sharing system for data relevant to performing fire assessments and modeling fire risk and fire behavior;

(ii) a system for ensuring that the fire prediction models of relevant agencies can be interconnected; and

(iii) to the maximum extent practicable, any recommendations included in the report required by section 12(c).

(D) A plan for incorporating and coordinating research and operational observations, including from infrared technologies, microwave, radars, satellites, mobile weather stations, and uncrewed aerial systems.

(E) A flexible framework to communicate clear and simple fire event information to the public.

(F) Integration of social, behavioral, risk, and communication research to improve the fire operational environment and societal information reception and response.

(c) SUNSET.—The Working Group shall terminate not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

SEC. 11. FIRE WEATHER RATING SYSTEM.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Under Secretary shall, in collaboration with the Chief of the United States Forest Service, the Director of the United States Geological Survey, the Director of the National Park Service, the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, and such stakeholders as the Under Secretary considers appropriate—

(1) evaluate the system used as of the date of the enactment of this Act to rate the risk of wildfire; and

(2) determine whether updates to that system are required to ensure that the ratings accurately reflect the severity of fire risk.

(b) UPDATE REQUIRED.—If the Under Secretary determines under subsection (a) that updates to the system described in paragraph (1) of such subsection are necessary, the Under Secretary shall update that system.

SEC. 12. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORTS.

(a) REPORT ON FIRE WEATHER SERVICES PROGRAM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on the program established under section 3(a).

(2) ELEMENTS.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall—

(A) evaluate the performance of the program by establishing initial baseline capabilities and tracking progress made toward fully operationalizing the functions described in section 3(b); and

(B) include such other recommendations as the Comptroller General determines are appropriate to improve the program.

(b) REPORT ON INTERAGENCY BODIES FOR WILDFIRE FORECASTING, PREVENTION, PLANNING, AND MANAGEMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) identifies all Federal interagency bodies established for the purpose of wildfire forecasting, prevention, planning, and management (such as wildfire councils, commissions, and workgroups), including—

(A) the Wildland Fire Leadership Council;

(B) the White House Wildfire Resilience Interagency Group;

(C) the Wildland Fire Management Policy Committee;

(D) the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission;

(E) the Joint Science Fire Program;

(F) the National Interagency Coordination Center;

(G) the National Predictive Services Oversight Group;

(H) the Interagency Council for Advancing Meteorological Services;

(I) the National Wildfire Coordinating Group;

(J) the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group; and

(K) the Mitigation Framework Leadership Group;

(2) evaluates the roles, functionality, and utility of such interagency bodies;

(3) evaluates the progress, performance, and implementation of such interagency bodies;

(4) assesses efficacy and identifies potential overlap and duplication of such interagency bodies in carrying out interagency collaboration with respect to wildfire prevention, planning, and management; and

(5) includes such other recommendations as the Comptroller General determines are appropriate to streamline and improve wildfire forecasting, prevention, planning, and management, including recommendations regarding the interagency bodies for which the addition of the Administration is necessary to improve wildfire forecasting, prevention, planning, and management.

(c) REPORT ON INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that identifies—

(1) the authorities, roles, and science and support services relating to wildland fire prediction, detection, forecasting, modeling, resilience, response, management, and assessment provided by—

(A) the Department of Commerce, including the Administration and the National Institute of Standards and Technology;

(B) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(C) the Department of the Interior;

(D) the Department of Agriculture;

(E) the National Science Foundation;

(F) the Department of Energy;

(G) the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(H) the Department of Transportation;

(I) the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(J) the Department of Defense; and

(2) recommended areas in and mechanisms by which the agencies listed under paragraph (1) could support and improve—

(A) coordination between Federal agencies, State and local governments, Indian tribes, Tribal organizations, Native Hawaiian organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, including through examination of possible public-private partnerships;

(B) research and development, including interdisciplinary research, related to fire environments, wildland fires, associated wildfire smoke, and the impacts of such environments, fires, and smoke, in furtherance of a coordinated interagency effort to address wildland fire risk reduction;

(C) data management and stewardship, the development and coordination of data systems and computational tools, and the creation of a centralized, integrated data collaboration environment for agency data, including historical data, relating to weather, fire environments, wildland fires, associated wildfire smoke, and the impacts of such environments, fires, and smoke, and the assessment of wildland fire risk mitigation measures;

(D) interoperability, usability, and accessibility of the scientific data, data systems, and computational and information tools of the agencies listed under paragraph (1);

(E) coordinated public safety communications relating to fire weather events, fire hazards, and wildland fire and smoke risk reduction strategies; and

(F) secure and accurate real-time data, alerts, and advisories to wildland firefighters and other decision support tools for wildland fire incident command posts.

(d) **REPORT ON AUTOMATED SURFACE OBSERVING SYSTEM.**—Not later than 4 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report that—

(1) evaluates the functionality, utility, reliability, and operational status of the automated surface observing system across the Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Department of Defense;

(2) evaluates the progress, performance, and implementation of the plan required by section 6(b)(1)(B);

(3) assesses the efficacy of cross-agency collaboration and stakeholder engagement in carrying out the plan and provides recommendations to improve such activities;

(4) evaluates the operational continuity and reliability of the system, particularly in remote and rural areas and areas where system failure would have the greatest negative impact to the community, and provides recommendations to improve such continuity and reliability;

(5) assesses Federal coordination regarding the remote automatic weather station network, air resource advisors, and other Federal observing assets used for weather and climate modeling and response activities, and provides recommendations for improvements; and

(6) includes such other recommendations as the Comptroller General determines are appropriate to improve the system.

SEC. 13. COOPERATION AND COORDINATION.

(a) **COOPERATION.**—Each Federal agency shall cooperate and coordinate with the Under Secretary, as appropriate, in carrying out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) **COORDINATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In meeting the requirements under this Act and the amendments made by this Act, the Under Secretary shall coordinate, and as appropriate, establish agreements with Federal and external partners to fully use and leverage existing assets, systems, networks, technologies, and sources of data.

(2) **INCLUSIONS.**—Coordination carried out under paragraph (1) shall include coordination with—

(A) the agencies represented at the National Interagency Fire Center;

(B) the Predictive Services Program of the National Interagency Coordination Center;

(C) the National Wildfire Coordinating Group; and

(D) relevant interagency bodies identified in the report required by section 12(b).

(3) **CONSULTATION.**—In carrying out this subsection, the Under Secretary shall consult with Federal partners including—

(A) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(B) the Department of the Interior;

(C) the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(D) the National Science Foundation;

(E) the United States Geological Survey;

(F) the Department of Agriculture;

(G) the Environmental Protection Agency;

(H) the Department of Energy;

(I) the Department of Defense;

(J) the National Institute of Standards and Technology; and

(K) such other departments and agencies as the Under Secretary considers relevant.

(c) **PROCESS FOR ANNUAL COORDINATION WITH NON-FEDERAL ENTITIES.**—Not later than 18 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Under Secretary shall develop and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a process for annual coordination with State and local governments, Indian tribes, Tribal organizations, and Native Hawaiian organizations to assist the development of improved fire weather products and services.

(d) **INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Under Secretary may develop collaborative relationships and agreements with foreign partners and counterparts to address transboundary issues pertaining to wildfires, fire weather, wildfire smoke, air quality, and associated conditions and hazards or other relevant meteorological phenomena, as appropriate, to facilitate full and open exchange of data and information.

(2) **CONSULTATION.**—In carrying out activities under this subsection, the Under Secretary shall consult with the Department of State and such other Federal partners as the Under Secretary considers relevant.

SEC. 14. GENERAL PROVISIONS.

(a) **AVOIDANCE OF DUPLICATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Under Secretary shall ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that activities carried out under this Act and the amendments made by this Act are not duplicative of activities supported by other parts of the Administration or other relevant Federal agencies.

(2) **COORDINATION.**—In carrying out activities under this Act and the amendments made by this Act, the Under Secretary shall coordinate with the Administration and heads of other Federal research agencies—

(A) to ensure those activities enhance and complement, but do not constitute unnecessary duplication of, efforts; and

(B) to ensure the responsible stewardship of funds.

(b) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this Act may be construed—

(1) to satisfy any requirement for government-to-government consultation with Indian tribes; or

(2) to affect or modify any treaty or other right of any Indian tribe.

SEC. 15. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Administration to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act—

(1) \$15,000,000 for fiscal year 2026;

(2) \$20,000,000 for fiscal year 2027;

(3) \$27,000,000 for fiscal year 2028;

(4) \$36,000,000 for fiscal year 2029; and

(5) \$50,000,000 for fiscal year 2030.

(b) **PROHIBITION.**—None of the amounts authorized to be appropriated by subsection (a) may be used to unnecessarily duplicate activities funded under title VIII of division D of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117–58; 135 Stat. 1094).

ENHANCING FIRST RESPONSE ACT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 146, S. 725.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant executive clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 725) to direct the Federal Communications Commission to issue reports after activation of the Disaster Information Reporting System and to make improvements to network outage reporting, to categorize public safety telecommunicators as a

protective service occupation under the Standard Occupational Classification system, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill which had been reported from the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in *italic*, as follows:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Enhancing First Response Act”.

SEC. 2. REPORTS AFTER ACTIVATION OF DISASTER INFORMATION REPORTING SYSTEM; IMPROVEMENTS TO NETWORK OUTAGE REPORTING.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **AUTOMATIC LOCATION INFORMATION; AUTOMATIC NUMBER IDENTIFICATION.**—The terms “Automatic Location Information” and “Automatic Number Identification” have the meanings given those terms in section 9.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(2) **BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS SERVICE.**—The term “broadband internet access service” has the meaning given the term in section 8.1(b) of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(3) **COMMERCIAL MOBILE SERVICE.**—The term “commercial mobile service” has the meaning given the term in section 332(d) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)).

(4) **COMMERCIAL MOBILE DATA SERVICE.**—The term “commercial mobile data service” has the meaning given the term in section 6001 of the Middle Class Tax Relief and Job Creation Act of 2012 (47 U.S.C. 1401).

(5) **COMMISSION.**—The term “Commission” means the Federal Communications Commission.

(6) **INDIAN TRIBAL GOVERNMENT; LOCAL GOVERNMENT.**—The terms “Indian tribal government” and “local government” have the meanings given those terms in section 102 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122).

(7) **INTERCONNECTED VOIP SERVICE.**—The term “interconnected VoIP service” has the meaning given that term in section 9.3 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(8) **MULTI-LINE TELEPHONE SYSTEM.**—The term “multi-line telephone system” has the meaning given the term in section 721(f) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 623(f)).

(9) **OUTAGE.**—The term “outage” has the meaning given the term in section 4.5 of title 47, Code of Federal Regulations, or any successor regulation.

(10) **PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT.**—The term “public safety answering point” has the meaning given the term in section 222(h) of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 222(h)).

(11) **STATE.**—The term “State” has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 153).

(12) **SYSTEM.**—The term “System” means the Disaster Information Reporting System.

(b) **REPORTS AFTER ACTIVATION OF THE DISASTER INFORMATION REPORTING SYSTEM.**—

(1) **PUBLIC HEARINGS.**—

(A) **REQUIREMENT.**—Each year, the Commission shall hold not less than 1 public hearing relating to all events during the preceding 1-year period for which the System was activated for not less than 7 days.

(B) **INCLUSION OF CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS IN PUBLIC HEARINGS.**—For each public hearing held under subparagraph (A), the Commission shall consider including—

(i) representatives of State government, local government, or Indian tribal governments in areas affected by such event;

(ii) residents of the areas affected by such event, or consumer advocates;