

Whereas the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations have also estimated that money laundered annually from illicit economic trade is between 2 and 5 percent of global gross domestic product, or up to \$6,000,000,000,000, as of 2025;

Whereas numerous international organizations recognize that the global illicit drug trade generates hundreds of billions of dollars per year;

Whereas the 2024 Global Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime noted a 25 percent increase in the number of trafficked victims in 2023 from 2022 data, and the Department of State estimates that at least 27,000,000 people were exploited for labor, services, and sexual slavery in 2024;

Whereas the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has highlighted the global trade in counterfeit and pirated products at approximately \$467,000,000,000, or 2.3 percent of total global imports;

Whereas INTERPOL and the United Nations Environment Programme have estimated the cost from an array of environmental crimes at more than \$250,000,000,000 annually;

Whereas the World Health Organization estimated the size of the global illicit cigarette market to be 11.6 percent of the global cigarette market in 2024 (or 657,000,000,000 cigarettes per year and approximately \$40,500,000,000 in lost revenue globally);

Whereas the Hubs of Illicit Trade Project at George Mason University has noted how criminals, counterfeiters, bad actors, illicit threat networks, and money launderers are reaping hundreds of billions of dollars in profit every year from criminality across critical hubs of illicit trade, global supply chains, and the digital world; and

Whereas public-private partnerships, public education, and general awareness of illicit trade are critically needed—

(1) to recognize the many forms of illicit trade;

(2) to understand the global scale and detrimental impacts of illicit trade on the United States and the international community;

(3) to encourage the public to report incidences of illicit trade; and

(4) to arm the Federal Government with the tools, legal authorities, and financial resources necessary to investigate, disrupt, and dismantle transnational illicit networks and their complicit enablers: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of June 11, 2026, as “Anti-Illicit Trade Awareness Day” to combat illicit trade in all criminal manifestations every day thereafter in the calendar year;

(2) supports the elevation of illicit trade and related illicit finance to national security priorities and the full integration of countering such illicit trade into the national security strategies of the United States to enhance this multi-dimensional criminal threat through coordinated executive agency actions;

(3) supports financial intelligence sharing on trade-based money laundering, integrated intelligence fusion centers to more comprehensively combat illicit trade, and a sustained global network of trade transparency units to combat cross-border flows of illicit goods and illicit financial flows; and

(4) continues to advance coordinated whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to combating illicit trade.

## AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 5887. Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5888. Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. LUJÁN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5889. Mr. KIM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5890. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. SHEEHY, and Mr. PADILLA)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5891. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5892. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5893. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5894. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Ms. ROSEN)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5895. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5896. Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5897. Mr. HOEVEN proposed an amendment to the bill S. 675, to contribute funds and artifacts to the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora, North Dakota.

SA 5898. Ms. DUCKWORTH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5899. Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5900. Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5901. Mr. MCCORMICK (for himself and Mr. FETTERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 5902. Mr. MCCORMICK (for himself and Ms. ROSEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, supra; which was ordered to lie on the table.

## TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

**SA 5887.** Mr. TILLIS submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XII, add the following:

### SEC. 1230. UNITED STATES SENATE NATO OBSERVER GROUP.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established within the Senate a group of Senators to address and advise on matters relating to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, to be known as the “Senate NATO Observer Group”.

(b) FUNCTIONS.—The Senate NATO Observer Group shall—

(1) serve as a forum for addressing matters relating to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that fall within the jurisdictions of 2 or more committees of the Senate;

(2) advise the Senate on issues relating to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, including North Atlantic Treaty Organization enlargement; and

(3) with respect to any matter involving the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the United States Government, particularly during negotiations on North Atlantic Treaty Organization enlargement, engage in close interactions between and among the executive branch, the Senate, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, any other member country of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, and any country that is a candidate for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

(c) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning in the 120th Congress, not later than 60 days after the date on which of the first session of each Congress convenes, the majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate shall each appoint to the Senate NATO Observer Group not more than 7 Senators.

(2) CO-CHAIRS.—Of the members appointed under paragraph (1), the majority leader and the minority leader of the Senate shall each appoint 1 co-chairperson of the Senate NATO Observer Group.

(3) EX OFFICIO MEMBERS.—The Senate NATO Observer Group shall include, as ex officio members, the chair and ranking member of each of the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate.

(d) USE OF FOREIGN CURRENCIES.—Beginning on the date of the enactment of this Act, the co-chairs of the Senate NATO Observer Group are authorized to use funds in accordance with the provisions of law relating to foreign currencies, as codified in section 1754 of title 22, United States Code, for activities critical to carrying out the functions of the Senate NATO Observer Group.

(e) REPORT.—Not less frequently than annually, the Senate NATO Observer Group shall submit to the majority leader and minority leader of the Senate and the chairperson and ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report on the activities undertaken by the Senate NATO Observer Group during the preceding fiscal year, including with respect to travel, legislative efforts, and public diplomacy initiatives.

**SA 5888.** Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself and Mr. LUJÁN) submitted an

amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_\_ . FEDERAL CARJACKING ENFORCEMENT.**

(a) **SHORT TITLE.**—This section may be cited as the “Federal Carjacking Enforcement Act”.

(b) **MOTOR VEHICLES.**—Section 2119 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “, with the intent to cause death or serious bodily harm” and inserting “knowingly”;

(2) in paragraph (1), by striking “both,” and inserting “both;”;

(3) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 25 years, or both, if—

“(A) the person taking, or attempting to take, the motor vehicle—

“(i) does so with the intent to cause death or serious bodily harm; or

“(ii) brandishes or discharges a firearm (as defined in section 921) during or in relation to such taking or attempted taking; and

“(B) serious bodily injury (as defined in section 1365, including any conduct that, if the conduct occurred in the special maritime and territorial jurisdiction of the United States, would violate section 2241 or 2242) results; and”;

(4) in paragraph (3), by striking “if death results,” and inserting “if the person taking, or attempting to take, the motor vehicle does so with the intent to cause death or serious bodily harm, and death results.”.

**SA 5889.** Mr. KIM submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title X, insert the following:

**SEC. 10 \_\_\_\_ . RESOURCES TO IMPLEMENT DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE POLICY ON CIVILIAN HARM.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall—

(1) designate within each component specified in subsection (b) an official responsible for—

(A) implementing and overseeing the implementation of Department of Defense Instruction 3000.17, which was issued pursuant to section 936 of the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019 (Public Law 115–232; 10 U.S.C. 134 note); and

(B) implementing and overseeing the implementation of all other policies of the Department of Defense on the protection of civilians and civilian harm mitigation and response, consistent with the laws of war; and

(2) take all necessary steps to maintain within the Civilian Protection Center of Excellence sufficient staff to carry out the pur-

poses of the Center set forth in section 184(b) of title 10, United States Code, and Department of Defense Instruction 3000.17.

(b) **COMPONENTS SPECIFIED.**—The components specified in this subsection are the following:

- (1) The Joint Staff.
- (2) The United States Central Command.
- (3) The United States Africa Command.
- (4) The United States Special Operations Command.
- (5) The United States European Command.
- (6) The United States Southern Command.
- (7) The United States Indo-Pacific Command.
- (8) The United States Northern Command.

**SA 5890.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. SHEEHY, and Mr. PADILLA)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end, add the following:

**DIVISION E—FIX OUR FORESTS ACT**

**SEC. 5001. SHORT TITLE.**

This division may be cited as the “Fix Our Forests Act”.

**SEC. 5002. DEFINITIONS.**

In this division:

(1) **END WATER USER.**—The term “end water user” has the meaning given the term in section 303(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6542(a)).

(2) **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.**—The term “Executive Director” means the Executive Director of the Wildland Fire Intelligence Center appointed under section 5102(g).

(3) **FIRESHED.**—The term “fired” means a landscape-scale area, as delineated using methods developed through research conducted by the Forest Service, that represents similar source levels of community exposure to wildfire.

(4) **FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREA.**—The term “fired management area” means a fired management area designated under section 5101(a).

(5) **FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECT.**—The term “fired management project” means any of the following forest or vegetation management activities:

(A) A hazardous fuels management activity.

(B) Creating a fuel break or fire break.

(C) Removing hazard trees, dead trees, or dying trees, as determined by a certified or licensed arborist or forester under the supervision of the Secretary concerned.

(D) Developing, approving, or conducting routine maintenance under—

(i) a vegetation management, facility inspection, and operation and maintenance plan under subsection (c) of section 512 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772); or

(ii) an agreement under subsection (d)(1) of that section (43 U.S.C. 1772).

(E) Removing trees to address overstocking or crowding in a forest stand, consistent with achieving the appropriate basal area of the forest stand, as determined by a responsible official.

(F) Using treatments to address insects or disease or to control vegetation competition or invasive species.

(G) A wet-meadow, floodplain, or riparian restoration activity that increases wildfire resistance.

(H) A forest stand improvement activity necessary to protect life and property from catastrophic wildfire, as determined by a responsible official.

(I) Any combination of activities described in this paragraph.

(6) **FIRESHED REGISTRY.**—The term “Fired Registry” means the registry established under section 5103(a).

(7) **FOREST PLAN.**—The term “forest plan” means—

(A) a land use plan prepared by the Bureau of Land Management for public land pursuant to section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712);

(B) a land management plan prepared by the Forest Service for a unit of the National Forest System pursuant to section 6 of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604); and

(C) a forest management plan (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103)) with respect to Indian forest land or rangeland.

(8) **GOVERNOR.**—The term “Governor” means the Governor or other appropriate executive official of—

(A) a State; or

(B) an Indian Tribe.

(9) **HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY.**—The term “hazardous fuels management activity” means a vegetation management activity, or any combination of such activities, that reduces the risk of wildfire, including mechanical thinning, mastication, prescribed burning, cultural burning (as determined by an Indian Tribe), timber harvest, and grazing.

(10) **HFRA TERMS.**—The terms “at-risk community”, “community wildfire protection plan”, and “wildland-urban interface” have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511).

(11) **INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND.**—The term “Indian forest land or rangeland” means—

(A) land that—

(i) is held in trust, or subject to a restriction against alienation, by the United States for an Indian Tribe or a member of an Indian Tribe; and

(ii)(I) is Indian forest land (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103)); or

(II)(aa) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

(bb) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration; and

(B) land that—

(i) is in the State of Alaska and held by an Alaskan Native Corporation pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.); and

(ii)(I) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

(II) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration.

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

(13) **NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.**—The term “National Forest System” has the meaning given the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

(14) **PUBLIC LAND.**—The term “public land” means—

(A) public lands (as defined in section 103 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1702));

(B) the land reconveyed to the United States pursuant to the first section of the Act of February 26, 1919 (40 Stat. 1179, chapter 47) (commonly known as “Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant lands”) under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior; and

(C) the land revested in the United States by the Act of June 9, 1916 (39 Stat. 218, chapter 137) (commonly known as “Oregon and California Railroad Grant lands”) under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior.

(15) RELEVANT COMMITTEES OF CONGRESS.—The term “relevant committees of Congress” means—

(A) in the Senate—  
(i) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry;

(ii) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources;

(iii) the Committee on Indian Affairs; and  
(iv) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and

(B) in the House of Representatives—

(i) the Committee on Agriculture; and

(ii) the Committee on Natural Resources.

(16) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries” means—

(A) the Secretary; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior.

(17) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

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

(A) the Secretary, with respect to National Forest System land; and

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, with respect to public land.

(19) SPECIAL DISTRICT.—The term “special district” means a political subdivision of a State that—

(A) has significant budgetary autonomy or control;

(B) was established by, or pursuant to, the laws of the State for the purpose of performing a limited and specific governmental or proprietary function primarily relating to forest, watershed, or rangeland management or water supply; and

(C) is distinct from any other unit of local government within the State.

(20) STATE.—The term “State” means—

(A) each of the several States;

(B) the District of Columbia; and

(C) each territory of the United States.

## TITLE I—LANDSCAPE-SCALE RESTORATION

### Subtitle A—Addressing Emergency Wildfire Risks in High-priority Firesheds

#### SEC. 5101. DESIGNATION OF FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.

(a) DESIGNATIONS.—

(1) INITIAL FIRESHED DESIGNATIONS.—For the 5-year period beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, the firesheds of the United States shall comprise—

(A) the 7,688 firesheds described in the report published by the Rocky Mountain Research Station of the Forest Service in 2021; and

(B) the additional 1,262 firesheds in the States of Alaska and Hawaii and the territories of the United States designated by the Secretary in the same manner as the firesheds designated in the report described in subparagraph (A).

(2) INITIAL FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREA DESIGNATIONS.—Subject to paragraph (5), for the period beginning not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act and ending on the date that is 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, each Secretary concerned shall designate and make publicly available on the website of the Secretary concerned a map of the following fireshed management areas:

(A) Each landscape-scale fireshed identified as a “high-risk fireshed” in the docu-

ment published by the Forest Service entitled “Wildfire Crisis Strategy”, dated January 2022, and expanded in 2023.

(B) The top 20 percent of firesheds in the continental United States, and the top 25 percent of firesheds in the continental United States if the fireshed has a historical presence of *Picea glauca var. densata*, identified by the Secretary for wildfire exposure based on the following criteria:

(i) Wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to communities, including risk to life, critical infrastructure, and other structures.

(ii) Wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to municipal watersheds, including Tribal water supplies and systems.

(3) INITIAL DESIGNATIONS IN ALASKA, HAWAII, AND TERRITORIES.—Not later than 30 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall designate in the States of Alaska and Hawaii and the territories of the United States such additional fireshed management areas as the Secretary determines to be appropriate, based on the criteria described in clauses (i) and (ii) of paragraph (2)(B).

(4) MAP-BASED UPDATED DESIGNATIONS.—

(A) MAP OF FIRESHEDS.—Not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once every 5 years thereafter, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress an updated map of the firesheds of the United States, which shall—

(i) be based on the Fireshed Registry; and

(ii) include firesheds in the States of Alaska and Hawaii and the territories of the United States.

(B) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.—Not later than 60 days after submitting an updated fireshed map under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall update the designations of fireshed management areas to reflect firesheds depicted on that map that the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, identifies as being in the top 20 percent of firesheds at risk of wildfire exposure based on the criteria described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of section 5103(a)(3) and in accordance with this section.

(C) PUBLICATION.—The Secretary shall make each updated map prepared under this paragraph publicly available on the Fireshed Registry.

(5) LAND LOCATION AND CONTENT.—A fireshed management area designated under this subsection—

(A) shall not overlap with any other fireshed management area; and

(B) may contain Federal and non-Federal land, including Indian forest land or rangeland.

(6) COMBINING MULTIPLE FIRESHEDS.—The Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, if applicable, may expand a fireshed management area designated under this subsection to include more than 1 fireshed that is designated as a fireshed management area under the applicable criteria described in this section.

(b) USE.—The Secretary concerned may carry out fireshed management projects on the fireshed management areas designated under this section.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—The designation of a fireshed management area under this section shall not be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

#### SEC. 5102. WILDLAND FIRE INTELLIGENCE CENTER.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BOARD.—The term “Board” means the Board of Directors governing the Center appointed under subsection (f).

(2) CENTER.—The term “Center” means the Wildland Fire Intelligence Center established under subsection (b).

(3) FEDERAL SCIENCE AGENCY; INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION; LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES; REGIONAL CENTER; WILDLAND FIRE; WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES; WILDLAND FIRE RESEARCH.—The terms “Federal science agency”, “institution of higher education”, “land-grant colleges and universities”, “regional center”, “wildland fire”, “wildland fire management agencies”, and “wildland fire research” have the meanings given those terms in section 5121(a).

(4) NATIONAL LABORATORY.—The term “National Laboratory” has the meaning given that term in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall establish a joint office, to be known as the “Wildland Fire Intelligence Center”, to serve Federal and non-Federal entities through the functions described in subsection (d).

(c) HEADQUARTERS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Board shall select from within the United States a permanent location for the physical headquarters of the Center.

(d) FUNCTIONS.—The functions of the Center shall include the following:

(1) Providing real-time, science-based, and data-rich scientific and technical analytical services, modeling, monitoring, mapping, decision support, and predictive services across all phases of fire to inform land and fuels management (including prescribed fire), pre-fire community and built environment risk reduction, active fire management and emergency response, and post-fire recovery in the built and natural environments.

(2) Providing, disseminating, procuring, if commercially available, and combining existing data, mapping, technological, and consultation services to support pre-, active, and post-fire activities at the local, State, and national levels, including—

(A) creating and maintaining a real-time nationwide risk catalog, including the Fireshed Registry;

(B) assisting with the creation of evacuation plans, public safety power shutoff plans, and wildfire mitigation and response strategies or plans (including built environment mitigation plans and community wildfire protection plans) for at-risk communities;

(C) providing decision support and gridded and point data forecast and assessment products in support of operational and planning activities, including the pre-positioning of wildfire suppression personnel and assets based on real-time-risk;

(D) assisting with the safe and effective use of prescribed fire; and

(E) developing a real-time data interface to assist and inform, in real time, firefighters, first responders, and approved contractors in responding to wildfires.

(3) Consolidating air quality monitoring and forecasting data, including utilizing existing Federal programs, as appropriate, to help inform risks to public health and protect the public from smoke impacts associated with wildfires, including providing planning guidance for safe and effective beneficial fire opportunities to prevent the risk of wildfires.

(4) Establishing information technology and data interoperability through—

(A) the development of common data standards to protect confidential information;

(B) comprehensive searchable data inventories;

(C) working with Indian Tribes in government-to-government partnerships, with protections for Tribal data sovereignty;

(D) the integration and sharing of information and resources of the Federal Government, States, local governments, and participating Indian Tribes to support the essential functions of the Center; and

(E) regular updates and maintenance of research and technology essential to achieving the core functions of the Center, including the evaluation of new and competing models as those models become available.

(5) Coordinating with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, as requested, to develop and improve wildfire preparedness curricula and training modules for States, Indian Tribes, and local officials, including emergency managers and responders.

(6) Administering the pilot program established under section 5303 and streamlining procurement processes for technologies identified under that pilot program and technology systems related to addressing wildfire and smoke for purposes of scaling such technologies and systems across Federal agencies.

(7) Engaging with relevant Federal agencies, State agencies, and entities in the private sector to improve fire environment monitoring, forecasting, communication, and response that may be essential to the core functions of the Center, if the Executive Director determines that the engagement is appropriate, beneficial, and cost-effective.

(8)(A) Establishing wildland fire science, data management and sharing protocols, and technological research priorities in cooperation with each regional center informed by the operational needs of wildland fire management agencies.

(B) Coordinating data collection efforts supporting the efforts of each regional center, including—

(i) building data layers across each region described in section 5121(c)(3)(B);

(ii) ensuring data collection and reporting across each region described in section 5121(c)(3)(B) is consistent and standardized; and

(iii) providing updates on the development of wildland fire research models.

(C) Ensuring the coordination of, and avoid unnecessary duplication of, the activities of the regional centers and the activities of institutions of higher education, land-grant colleges and universities, Federal science agencies, and State research organizations with respect to wildland fire research, including—

(i) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(ii) the National Science Foundation;

(iii) the National Laboratories;

(iv) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(v) the Environmental Protection Agency;

(vi) the United States Fire Administration;

(vii) the United States Geological Survey;

(viii) the research and development program of the Forest Service;

(ix) the interagency Joint Fire Science Program;

(x) the Department of Defense Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program; and

(xi) any other relevant entity with specialized expertise in wildland fire research.

(D) Supporting end-to-end applications that assist wildland fire management agencies in adopting technologies and incorporating research findings produced by the regional centers.

(e) CENTER FUNDING.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To carry out the functions of the Center, the Secretaries may transfer funds provided to establish, and carry out the duties of, the Center among—

(A) the Forest Service, from amounts made available for Wildland Fire Management;

(B) the Department of the Interior, from amounts made available for Wildland Fire Management; and

(C) the United States Geological Survey.

(2) INTERAGENCY FINANCING.—Notwithstanding section 708 of the Financial Services and General Government Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328; 136 Stat. 4706), or any other, similar provision of law, interagency financing may be used to fund the Center.

(3) NOTICE REQUIRED.—Not later than 15 days before transferring funds under paragraph (1) or (2), the Secretary or the Secretary of the Interior, as applicable, shall submit to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a notice of the proposed transfer.

(f) BOARD.—

(1) MEMBERSHIP.—The Center shall be governed by a Board of Directors, to be composed of 18 members, as follows:

(A) 1 member who is a career employee of the Department of Agriculture, to be appointed by the Secretary.

(B) 1 member who is a career employee of the research and development areas of the Forest Service, to be appointed by the Chief of the Forest Service.

(C) 1 member who is a career employee in fire and aviation management of the Forest Service, to be appointed by the Chief of the Forest Service.

(D) 1 member who is a career employee of the Department of the Interior, to be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior.

(E) 1 member who is a career employee of the Bureau of Land Management, to be appointed by the Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

(F) 1 member who is a career employee of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to be appointed by the Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs.

(G) 1 member who is a career employee of the National Park Service, to be appointed by the Director of the National Park Service.

(H) 1 member who is a career employee of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to be appointed by the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(I) 1 member who is a career employee of the United States Geological Survey, to be appointed by the Director of the United States Geological Survey.

(J) 1 member who is a career employee of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, to be appointed by the Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(K) 1 member who is a career employee of the National Weather Service, to be appointed by the Director of the National Weather Service.

(L) 1 member who is a career employee of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to be appointed by the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(M) 1 member who is a career employee of the United States Fire Administration, to be appointed by the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration.

(N) 1 member who is a career employee of the Department of Defense, to be appointed by the Secretary of Defense.

(O) 1 member who is a career employee of the National Science Foundation, to be appointed by the Director of the National Science Foundation.

(P) 1 member who is a career employee of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, to be appointed by the Adminis-

trator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

(Q) 1 member who is an elected leader of an Indian Tribe or an expert in wildfire management designated by an Indian Tribe.

(R) 1 member representing State forestry agencies, to be appointed by the Secretaries.

(2) TERMS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term of a member of the Board shall be 3 years, except that, of the members first appointed—

(i)  $\frac{1}{3}$  shall serve for a term of 4 years;

(ii)  $\frac{1}{3}$  shall serve for a term of 3 years; and

(iii)  $\frac{1}{3}$  shall serve for a term of 2 years.

(B) ADDITIONAL TERMS.—After the initial term of a member of the Board, including the members first appointed, the member may serve not more than 3 additional 3-year terms, except that a member initially appointed to a term of 4 years may serve not more than 2 additional 3-year terms.

(3) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Board—

(A) shall be selected by the members of the Board from among the members appointed under subparagraphs (B), (I), and (J) of paragraph (1);

(B) shall serve for a term of 1 year; and

(C) may be reelected as Chairperson not more than twice.

(4) MAJORITY VOTE.—A voting consensus by the Board shall be not less than a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote of the members present.

(5) NONVOTING STATUS.—At the discretion of the Board, the Board may include nonvoting observers to the Board.

(g) EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Center shall have an Executive Director, who shall—

(A) be appointed by, and serve at the direction of, the Board; and

(B) be responsible for the management and operation of the Center.

(2) CONTRACTING AUTHORITY.—The Executive Director may enter into and perform contracts, agreements, memoranda of understanding, or other, similar transactions, as the Executive Director determines to be appropriate to carry out the functions of the Center described in subsection (d).

(h) DETAILES.—The Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior may detail or assign to the Center such employees of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, respectively, as the Secretaries determine to be necessary to carry out the duties of the Center.

(i) COORDINATION WITH OTHER AGENCIES AND ENTITIES.—To carry out the functions of the Center described in subsection (d), the Board shall coordinate with agencies represented on the Board and other relevant entities, including—

(1) the National Wildfire Coordinating Group; and

(2) any relevant Federal agency, State, Indian Tribe, local government, or nongovernmental entity that is representative of an element of the wildland fire community.

(j) OPERATIONAL PLAN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the appointment of the Executive Director, the Executive Director shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress an initial operational plan describing—

(A) the structure of the Center;

(B) staffing and funding needs of the Center;

(C) technological capabilities within the Department of Agriculture, the Department of the Interior, and the other Federal departments and agencies comprising the Board that are available to the Center;

(D) an assessment of the potential of commercially available technologies to perform the functions of the Center, together with the costs and timelines of procuring those

technologies or developing relevant capabilities;

(E) an assessment of—

(i) existing contracting authorities of the Executive Director to be used for purposes of subsection (g)(2); and

(ii) new contracting authorities needed; and

(F) a timeline for full operational functioning of the Center.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The plan under paragraph (1) shall include estimated costs, key milestones, coordination strategies with Federal, State, and private entities, and recommendations for ensuring the effective operation of the Center.

(3) UPDATES.—The Executive Director shall update the plan not less frequently than annually to reflect progress, adjustments in funding, and the adoption of new technologies.

(k) PILOT PROGRAM TO MONITOR WILDFIRES BY SATELLITE.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, in partnership with the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the United States Geological Survey, and with the Executive Director, shall establish a pilot program—

(1) to purchase and integrate, through a public-private partnership, data from the latest-generation of wildfire monitoring satellites that provide monitoring of active fire behavior, including fire perimeters, burned area, intensity, severity, and the detection of fires with a low false-positive rate;

(2) to use the data acquired under paragraph (1), and any analyses relating to that data—

(A) to detect, assess, respond to, and manage wildfires and rangeland fires; and

(B) to ensure the safety and effectiveness of prescribed fire treatments;

(3) to develop information-sharing partnerships with State, local, and Tribal emergency managers, foresters, or other equivalent officials—

(A) to improve State, local, and Tribal wildfire monitoring, response, and analysis; and

(B) to provide to the Executive Director an operational plan for scaling the pilot program across the United States; and

(4) under which the Secretary of the Interior shall have the authority to enter into other transactions to leverage satellite-based wildfire monitoring capabilities.

(l) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section affects the ownership of any data source.

#### SEC. 5103. FIRESHED REGISTRY.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretaries, acting through the Executive Director, shall establish and maintain, on a publicly accessible website, a registry, to be known as the “Fireshed Registry”, that provides interactive geospatial data relating to individual firesheds, including information relating to—

(1) wildland fire exposure, delineated by—

(A) ownership, including rights-of-way for utilities and other public or private purposes; and

(B) administrative or management responsibility;

(2) any hazardous fuels management activities that have occurred within an individual fireshed during the preceding 10 years;

(3) wildland fire exposure with respect to a fireshed, delineated by—

(A) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to communities, including risk to life, critical infrastructure, and other structures;

(B) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to municipal watersheds, including Tribal water supplies and systems; and

(C) risk of vegetation type conversion due to wildfire;

(4) the percentage of a fireshed burned in wildfire during the preceding 10 years, including, to the extent practicable, delineations of acres that have burned at a high severity;

(5) spatial patterns of wildfire exposure, including plausible extreme fire events; and

(6) any hazardous fuels management activities scheduled for a fireshed, including fireshed management projects.

(b) COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS.—The Executive Director shall make data from the Fireshed Registry available to local and Tribal communities developing or updating community wildfire protection plans or Indian country community wildfire protection plans.

(c) MAINTENANCE.—As part of the website containing the Fireshed Registry, the Executive Director shall—

(1) publish fireshed assessments conducted under section 5105; and

(2) maintain a searchable database to track—

(A) the status of Federal environmental reviews, permits, and authorizations for fireshed management projects, including—

(i) a comprehensive permitting timetable;

(ii) the status of the compliance of each lead agency, cooperating agency, and participating agency with the permitting timetable with respect to fireshed management projects;

(iii) any required modifications of the permitting timetable under clause (i), including an explanation regarding why the permitting timetable was modified; and

(iv) information regarding any public meetings, public hearings, and public comment periods relating to a fireshed management project, as that information becomes available, which shall be presented in—

(I) English; and

(II) the predominant language of each community that is most affected by the fireshed management project, as that information becomes available;

(B) the projected cost of fireshed management projects; and

(C) in the case of a completed fireshed management project, the estimated effectiveness of the fireshed management project in—

(i) reducing the wildfire exposure within the applicable fireshed, including wildfire exposure described in subparagraphs (A) through (C) of subsection (a)(3); and

(ii) increasing the resilience of wildlife habitats, including habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).

(d) INCORPORATION OF EXISTING ASSESSMENTS AND DATA.—In carrying out this section, the Executive Director shall incorporate any assessments completed or data gathered through existing partnerships, to the extent practicable.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—The establishment and maintenance of the Fireshed Registry under this section shall not be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

#### SEC. 5104. SHARED STEWARDSHIP.

(a) JOINT AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary concerned shall seek to use an existing shared stewardship agreement, modify an existing shared stewardship agreement, or enter into a similar agreement with the Governor of each State and Indian Tribe that contains a fireshed management area designated under section 5101(a)—

(1) to promote the reduction of wildfire exposure, based on the criteria described in section 5103(a)(3), in fireshed management areas across jurisdictional boundaries; and

(2) to conduct fireshed assessments under section 5105.

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF BOUNDARIES AND UPDATES TO AGREEMENTS.—With respect to an agreement under subsection (a), the Secretary concerned, on request of the applicable Governor, may—

(1) adjust the boundaries of any applicable fireshed management area to include additional areas from within a separate fireshed management area designated under section 5101; and

(2) update the agreement to address any new wildfire threats.

(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretaries may enter into cooperative agreements with units of local government, special districts, end water users, nongovernmental organizations, institutions of higher education, Tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)), Native Hawaiian organizations (as defined in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)), and other entities, at the discretion of the applicable Secretary to carry out the activities described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (a).

#### SEC. 5105. FIRESHED ASSESSMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned, in cooperation with the Governor with whom the Secretary concerned enters into an agreement under section 5104(a), if applicable, shall conduct a fireshed assessment in accordance with this section with respect to each fireshed management area designated in the applicable State or area of Indian land.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each fireshed assessment under subsection (a) shall—

(A) identify—

(i) using the best available science, wildfire exposure risks within the applicable fireshed management area, including scenario planning and wildfire hazard mapping and models; and

(ii) each at-risk community within the fireshed management area;

(B) identify the types of fireshed management projects that could benefit the fireshed management area, with an emphasis on reducing—

(i) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to communities, including risk to life, critical infrastructure, and other structures;

(ii) wildfire exposure and corresponding risk to municipal watersheds, including Tribal water supplies and systems;

(iii) risk of vegetation type conversion due to wildfire;

(iv) wildfire risk for wildlife habitats, including habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(v) wildfire risk to resources of an Indian Tribe, as defined by the Indian Tribe; or

(vi) any combination of purposes described in clauses (i) through (v); and

(C) include, with respect to the applicable fireshed management area—

(i) a strategy for reducing the threat of wildfire—

(I) to protect at-risk communities in the wildland-urban interface on Federal and non-Federal land;

(II) to improve the effectiveness of wildfire firefighting, particularly the effectiveness of fuels treatments that would improve wildfire firefighter safety during wildfires; and

(III) to reduce risk to wildlife habitats, including habitat for species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(ii) a timeline for the implementation of fireshed management projects;

(iii) long-term benchmark goals for the completion of fireshed management projects in the highest wildfire exposure areas to ensure that those fireshed management projects contribute to the development and maintenance of healthy and resilient landscapes;

(iv) a strategy to ensure that fireshed management projects comply with applicable forest plans and incorporate the best available science; and

(v) a strategy for maximizing the retention of late-successional forests, to the extent that the trees promote stands that are resilient to insects and disease, and reduce the risk or extent of, or increase resilience to, wildfires.

(2) EXISTING PLANS.—To the maximum extent practicable, a fireshed assessment shall incorporate and build on information, planning, and strategies contained in relevant forest plans, State forest action plans, Tribal integrated resource management plans or Tribal forest management plans, watershed management plans, community wildfire protection plans, Indian country wildfire protection plans, and similar locally led landscape planning documents.

(3) PARTICIPATION.—

(A) STATE, TRIBAL, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.—In addition to the parties to an applicable agreement described in subsection (a), the Secretary concerned shall coordinate with States, Indian Tribes, units of local government, and other entities that are parties to an agreement under section 5104(c) within a fireshed management area in conducting the fireshed assessment under paragraph (1).

(B) PUBLIC.—In carrying out a fireshed assessment under this section, the Secretary concerned shall provide an opportunity for public participation during the 45-day period beginning on the date of initiation of the assessment, including—

(i) publication of information regarding the development of the assessment—

(I) on a website maintained by the Secretary concerned; and

(II) at convenient locations within the applicable fireshed management area; and

(ii) at least 1 public meeting.

(c) UPDATES AND AVAILABILITY.—Each fireshed assessment under subsection (a) shall be—

(1) regularly updated based on the best available science, subject to the requirements of subsection (d)(2); and

(2) made publicly available on 1 or more websites maintained by the Secretary concerned, including the Fireshed Registry.

(d) INFORMATION IMPROVEMENT.—

(1) AGREEMENTS.—In carrying out a fireshed assessment under this section, the Secretary concerned may enter into agreements with other Federal departments and agencies (including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), States, Indian Tribes, Tribal organizations (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)), Native Hawaiian organizations (as defined in section 6207 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7517)), private entities, or research or educational institutions to improve, with respect to the assessment, the use and integration of—

(A) advanced remote sensing and geospatial technologies;

(B) statistical modeling and analysis; or

(C) any other technology or combination of technologies and analyses that the Secretary concerned determines will benefit the quality of information in the assessment.

(2) BEST AVAILABLE SCIENCE.—In using the best available science for a fireshed assessment under this section, the Secretary con-

cerned and the applicable Governor shall incorporate, to the maximum extent practicable—

(A) traditional ecological knowledge;

(B) data from State forest action plans and State wildfire risk assessments;

(C) data from the Fireshed Registry; and

(D) data from other Federal, State, Tribal, and local governments or agencies.

(e) APPLICABILITY OF NEPA.—A fireshed assessment under this section shall not be subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.).

**SEC. 5106. EMERGENCY FIRESHED MANAGEMENT.**

(a) FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned, acting through a responsible official, shall carry out fireshed management projects on land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned in fireshed management areas in accordance with this section, the applicable forest plan, and the laws (including regulations) applicable to the Secretary concerned.

(2) APPLICABILITY OF OTHER PROVISIONS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The following shall have the force and effect of law with respect to any fireshed management project carried out in a fireshed management area:

(i) Section 220.4(b) of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on April 9, 2025), with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary.

(ii) Section 46.150 of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on April 9, 2025), with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior.

(iii) Section 402.05 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on April 9, 2025).

(iv) Section 800.12 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on April 9, 2025), except that any reference contained in that regulation to an “agency official” shall be considered to be a reference to a responsible official.

(B) DETERMINATION OF EMERGENCY.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—A regulation referred to in subparagraph (A) shall not apply pursuant to that subparagraph with respect to a fireshed management project unless, before carrying out the fireshed management project, a responsible official—

(I) determines, in accordance with the regulation, that an emergency or emergency circumstance exists;

(II) completes any documentation or identification processes required under such regulation; and

(III) provides public notice of the determination of emergency and each related fireshed management project activity by publishing such determination on a website maintained by the Secretary concerned.

(ii) REQUIREMENT.—In carrying out a fireshed management project under a regulation referred to in subparagraph (A), a responsible official shall ensure that such fireshed management project is consistent with the applicable forest plan and the laws (including regulations) and policies applicable to the Secretary concerned.

(C) FURTHER CLARIFICATION.—A regulation referred to in subparagraph (A) shall not apply to any fireshed management project unless such fireshed management project will achieve a land management goal described in section 604(c) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c(c)).

(D) UTILIZATION OF EXISTING STREAMLINED AUTHORITIES IN FIRESHED MANAGEMENT AREAS.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, with respect to each fireshed management area that contains Federal land, the Secretary

concerned, acting through a responsible official, shall use not fewer than 1 of the following expedited authorities for environmental review to carry out fireshed management projects:

(I) Section 603(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(a)).

(II) Section 605(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591d(a)).

(III) Section 606(b) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591e(b)).

(IV) Section 40806(b) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(b)).

(ii) COMPLIANCE WITH NEPA.—In applying expedited authorities for environmental review to carry out fireshed management projects under clause (i), the Secretary concerned shall ensure—

(I) such project is carried out in accordance with the statute establishing the categorical exclusion applied by the Secretary concerned;

(II) compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

(III) such project is carried out in accordance with the applicable forest plan and the laws and policies applicable to the Secretary concerned.

(iii) ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY ACTIONS.—The Secretary may declare an emergency pursuant to section 40807 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592c) for any fireshed management project.

(iv) FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary concerned shall ensure compliance with the amendments made to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) by the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023 (Public Law 118-5; 137 Stat. 38).

(v) USE OF OTHER AUTHORITIES.—To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary concerned shall use the authorities, if applicable, provided under this section in combination with other authorities to carry out fireshed management projects, including—

(I) good neighbor agreements under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) (as amended by this division);

(II) stewardship contracting projects entered into under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) (as amended by this division);

(III) self-determination contracts and self-governance compact agreements entered into under the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.); and

(IV) agreements and contracts entered into under the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-278; 118 Stat. 868).

(b) EXPANSION.—

(1) HEALTHY FORESTS RESTORATION ACT AMENDMENTS.—

(A) DEFINITIONS.—Section 3 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6502) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (2), by striking “450b” and inserting “5304”; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) LOCAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘local government’ means—

“(A) a county;

“(B) a municipality; and

“(C) a special district.

“(4) SPECIAL DISTRICT.—The term ‘special district’ means a political subdivision of a State that—

“(A) has significant budgetary autonomy or control;

“(B) was established by, or pursuant to, the laws of the State for the purpose of performing a limited and specific governmental or proprietary function primarily relating to forest, watershed, or rangeland management or water supply; and

“(C) is distinct from any other unit of local government within the State.”.

(B) ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW.—Section 603(c) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591b(c)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “3000 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”; and

(ii) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking “Fire Regime Groups I, II, or III” and inserting “Fire Regime I, Fire Regime II, Fire Regime III, or Fire Regime IV”.

(C) WILDFIRE RESILIENCE PROJECTS.—Section 605(c) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591d(c)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “3000 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”; and

(ii) in paragraph (4), by striking “code of Federal regulations (or successor regulations)” and inserting “Code of Federal regulations (or a successor regulation)”.

(D) GREATER SAGE-GROUSE AND MULE DEER HABITAT.—Section 606 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591e) is amended—

(i) in subsection (c), by striking “concurrently for both greater sage-grouse and” and inserting “for greater sage-grouse or”; and

(ii) in subsection (g)(1), by striking “4,500 acres” and inserting “7,500 acres”.

(2) INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT AND JOBS ACT AMENDMENT.—Section 40806(d)(1) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592b(d)(1)) is amended by striking “3,000 acres” and inserting “10,000 acres”.

**SEC. 5107. STUDY ON THE IMPACTS OF FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECTS ON WILDFIRE RISK TO COMMUNITIES AND WILDLIFE HABITAT.**

(a) STUDY REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, shall enter into an agreement with the National Academy of Sciences, under which the National Academy of Sciences shall conduct 1 or more studies on the impacts of fireshed management projects, including—

(1) an evaluation of select, regionally varied fireshed management projects and approaches, including—

(A) methodologies used to assess fireshed management areas;

(B) the reduction in fuel hazards in fireshed management areas;

(C) the status of, and trends in, watershed conditions;

(D) the economic use of fireshed management project byproducts;

(E) local jobs and labor income supported by fireshed management projects; and

(F) coordinated approaches taken to plan and implement fireshed management projects;

(2) changes to wildfire risk within fireshed management areas, and to resources of an Indian Tribe, due to fireshed management projects;

(3)(A) a description of the cost of—

(i) the implementation of section 5105; and

(ii) the development and implementation of fireshed management projects; and

(B) an estimate of the amount of the damages avoided as a result of that development and implementation;

(4) an evaluation of how fireshed management projects affect—

(A) critical habitat areas designated under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); and

(B) the conservation and recovery of species listed as threatened or endangered under the that Act;

(5) an identification of fireshed management project best practices for minimizing harm to critical habitat areas described in paragraph (4)(A) and the natural environment while reducing wildfire risk; and

(6) recommendations for policy, regulatory, or operational changes to improve fireshed management projects.

(b) ENGAGEMENT.—In conducting the 1 or more studies under subsection (a), the National Academy of Sciences shall—

(1) consult with relevant Federal, State, and Tribal agencies, including the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service; and

(2) provide an opportunity for public comment and input during the 1 or more studies, including from nonprofit organizations, institutions of higher education, and other scientific bodies.

(c) SUBMISSION OF REPORT.—As soon as practicable after the conclusion of the 1 or more studies under subsection (a), but not later than 5 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the National Academy of Sciences shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress and the Secretaries 1 or more reports containing the results of the 1 or more studies.

**SEC. 5108. SUNSET.**

The authority under this subtitle terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**Subtitle B—Expanding Collaborative Tools to Reduce Wildfire Risk and Improve Forest Health**

**SEC. 5111. MODIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF CERTAIN REVENUE AND PAYMENTS UNDER GOOD NEIGHBOR AGREEMENTS.**

(a) GOOD NEIGHBOR AUTHORITY.—Section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “either the Secretary or a Governor or county” and inserting “the Secretary, a Governor, an Indian tribe, a special district, or a county”;

(B) in paragraph (5), by striking “Governor or” and inserting “Governor, an Indian tribe, a special district, or a”;

(C) in paragraph (6), by striking “or Indian tribe”; and

(D) by adding at the end the following:

“(11) SPECIAL DISTRICT.—The term ‘special district’ means a political subdivision of a State that—

“(A) has significant budgetary autonomy or control;

“(B) was established by, or pursuant to, the laws of the State for the purpose of performing a limited and specific governmental or proprietary function primarily relating to forest, watershed, or rangeland management or water supply; and

“(C) is distinct from any other unit of local government within the State.”; and

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “or county” and inserting “, an Indian tribe, a special district, or a county”;

(B) in paragraph (2)(C)—

(i) in clause (i)—

(I) in the matter preceding subclause (I), by inserting “special district,” after “Indian Tribe,” each place it appears;

(II) in subclause (I)—

(aa) by striking “on”; and

(bb) by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(III) in subclause (II)—

(aa) in the matter preceding item (aa), by striking “clause (i)” and inserting “subclause (I)”;

(bb) in item (bb), by striking “the Good Neighbor Authority for Recreation Act.” and inserting “section 351 of the EXPLORE Act (16 U.S.C. 8571);”; and

(IV) by adding at the end the following:

“(III) if there are funds remaining after carrying out subclause (II)—

“(aa) to carry out authorized restoration services under other good neighbor agreements; and

“(bb) for the administration of a good neighbor authority program by a Governor, Indian tribe, special district, or county.”; and

(ii) in clause (ii), by striking “2028” and inserting “2030”;

(C) in paragraph (3), by striking “or county” and inserting “, an Indian tribe, a special district, or a county”; and

(D) by striking paragraph (4).

(b) TECHNICAL AMENDMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 443 of division E of Public Law 118–42 (138 Stat. 297) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “Agriculture Act of 2014” and inserting “Agricultural Act of 2014”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect on the date of enactment of Public Law 118–42 (138 Stat. 25).

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) shall apply to any project initiated pursuant to a good neighbor agreement (as defined in section 8206(a) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a(a)))—

(1) before the date of enactment of this Act, if the project was initiated after the date of enactment of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–334; 132 Stat. 4490); or

(2) on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5112. FIXING STEWARDSHIP END RESULT CONTRACTING.**

Section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by inserting “, including retaining and expanding existing forest products infrastructure necessary to carry out an agreement or contract under this subsection” before the period at the end; and

(2) in subsection (d)(3)(B), by striking “10 years” and inserting “20 years”; and

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

“(4) SPECIAL RULE FOR LONG-TERM STEWARDSHIP CONTRACTS.—

“(A) DEFINITION OF MULTIYEAR CONTRACT.—In this paragraph, the term ‘multiyear contract’ means a contract entered into under subsection (b) that—

“(i) has a term of longer than 5 years; and

“(ii) is entered into on or after the date of enactment of this paragraph.

“(B) SPECIAL RULE.—A multiyear contract entered into under subsection (b) by the Chief or the Director with an entity shall provide that, in the case of cancellation or termination of the multiyear contract by the Chief or the Director, the Chief or the Director, as applicable, shall provide to the entity a cancellation or termination payment that is the lesser of—

“(i) an amount equal to 10 percent of the multiyear contract; or

“(ii) the amount of unrecovered costs that would have been recouped through amortization over the full term of the contract (including the term canceled).”.

**SEC. 5113. FIRESHED MANAGEMENT PROJECT STRIKE TEAMS.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary concerned shall establish strike teams to assist the Secretary concerned with—

(1) any reviews, including analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), consultations under division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code (formerly known as the “National Historic Preservation Act”), and consultations under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), with the intent to accelerate and streamline interagency consultation processes;

(2) the implementation of any necessary site preparation work in advance of, or as part of, a firehatched management project;

(3) the implementation of firehatched management projects; and

(4) any combination of purposes described in paragraphs (1) through (3).

(b) MEMBERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned may appoint not more than 10 individuals to serve on a strike team under this section, to be composed of—

(A) employees of the department under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned;

(B) employees of a different Federal department or agency, with the consent of the head of that department or agency; and

(C) private contractors or volunteers from any nonprofit organization, State government, Indian Tribe, local government, quasi-governmental agency, academic institution, or private organization.

(2) REQUIREMENT.—In appointing individuals under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall appoint not fewer than 1 employee of the Federal agency with jurisdiction over the applicable Federal land.

(c) REVIEW RESPONSIBILITY.—The Secretary concerned shall—

(1) determine the sufficiency of the documents prepared by a strike team under this section; and

(2) retain responsibility for any authorizing decision relating to such a document.

(d) SUNSET.—The authority under this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5114. LOCALLY LED RESTORATION.**

Section 14(d) of the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (16 U.S.C. 472a(d)) is amended, in the first sentence, by striking “\$10,000” and inserting “\$55,000”.

**SEC. 5115. JOINT CHIEFS LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM.**

Section 40808 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) to recover from wildfire; or

“(E) to enhance soil, water, and related natural resources.”;

(2) in subsection (d)(1)—

(A) in subparagraph (A), by inserting “and post-wildfire impacts” after “wildfire risk”; and

(B) in subparagraph (F), by inserting “, as identified in the corresponding State forest action plan, Tribal-integrated resource management plan or Tribal forest management plan, or similar priority plan (such as a State wildlife or water plan)” before the semicolon;

(3) in subsection (g), by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) ADDITIONAL REPORTS.—For each of fiscal years 2022 and 2023, and not less frequently than once every 2 fiscal years thereafter, the Chiefs shall submit a report describing projects for which funding is provided under the Program, including the status and outcomes of those projects, to—

“(A) in the Senate—

“(i) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry;

“(ii) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources;

“(iii) the Committee on Appropriations; and

“(iv) the Committee on Indian Affairs; and

“(B) in the House of Representatives—

“(i) the Committee on Agriculture;

“(ii) the Committee on Natural Resources; and

“(iii) the Committee on Appropriations.”;

and

(4) in subsection (h)(1), by striking “and 2023” and inserting “through 2031”.

**SEC. 5116. COLLABORATIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROGRAM.**

Section 4003 of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (2)(B)(ii), by striking “500 note” and inserting “7125”; and

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (D), by striking “species;” and inserting “species or pathogens;”;

(ii) in subparagraph (G), by striking “and” at the end;

(iii) in subparagraph (H), by adding “and” after the semicolon at the end; and

(iv) by adding at the end the following:

“(I) address standardized monitoring questions and indicators;”;

(2) in subsection (c)(3)(A)—

(A) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

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

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(iii) include a Federal Government staffing plan for providing support to collaboratives established pursuant to subsection (b)(2);”;

(3) in subsection (d)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (E), by striking “and” at the end;

(ii) in subparagraph (F), by striking the period at the end and inserting a semicolon; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(G) proposals that seek to use innovative implementation mechanisms, including conservation finance agreements, good neighbor agreements entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a), and similar implementation mechanisms;

“(H) proposals that seek to reduce the risk of uncharacteristic wildfire or increase ecological restoration activities—

“(i) within areas across land ownerships, including State, Tribal, and private land; and

“(ii) within the wildland-urban interface (as defined in section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511)); and

“(I) proposals that seek to enhance watershed health and drinking water sources.”;

(B) in paragraph (3)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking “10” and inserting “20”; and

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “2” and inserting “4”;

(4) in subsection (e)(3), by inserting “conflict resolution or collaborative governance,” before “and woody”; and

(5) in subsection (f)—

(A) in paragraph (4)(B)(ii), by striking “\$4,000,000” and inserting “\$8,000,000”; and

(B) in paragraph (6), by striking “2023” and inserting “2034”.

**SEC. 5117. UTILIZING GRAZING FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION.**

(a) STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned, in coordination with the holders of permits to graze livestock on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned and in consultation with other relevant stakeholders, shall develop a strategy to utilize livestock grazing as a wildfire risk reduction tool on Federal

land, consistent with the laws applicable to the Secretary concerned.

(2) INCLUSIONS.—The strategy under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) the completion of any reviews required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) to allow permitted grazing on vacant grazing allotments during instances of drought, wildfire, or other natural disasters that disrupt grazing on allotments already permitted, subject to the requirement that, in selecting the vacant grazing allotments for use under this subparagraph, the Secretary concerned shall prioritize the use of allotments that would not pose significant management or resource challenges for the permittee or the Secretary concerned and return permittees to their original allotment as soon as practicable;

(B) the use of targeted grazing to reduce hazardous fuels;

(C) an increased use of temporary permits to promote targeted fuels reduction and reduction of invasive annual grasses;

(D) an increased use of livestock grazing—

(i) to eradicate invasive annual grasses; and

(ii) as a post-fire restoration and recovery strategy, as appropriate;

(E) an integrated use of advanced technologies to dynamically adjust livestock placement;

(F) an increased use of any authorities applicable to livestock grazing, including modifications to grazing permits or leases to allow variances pursuant to paragraph (3);

(G) the utilization of grazing on Federal land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned in a manner that—

(i) avoids conflicts with other uses of that Federal land; and

(ii) is consistent with any applicable land management plan; and

(H) the use of any other means determined to be appropriate by the Secretary concerned.

(3) VARIANCES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—At the request of an authorized grazing permittee or lessee, the Secretary concerned may allow a temporary variance to the terms and conditions of a grazing permit or lease to address significant changes in weather, forage production, the effects of fire or drought, or other temporary circumstances that impact resource conditions, to facilitate the long-term ecological health of the Federal land.

(B) VARIANCES.—In carrying out subparagraph (A), the Secretary concerned may authorize a temporary variance to the terms and conditions of the applicable grazing permit or lease to adjust the beginning date, the ending date, both the beginning date and ending date, or water transportation, as applicable, as specified in the applicable grazing permit or lease, subject to—

(i) the requirement that, unless otherwise specified in the appropriate allotment management plan or any other activity plan that is the functional equivalent to the appropriate allotment management plan under section 4120.2(a)(3) of title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), the applicable adjusted date of the season of use—

(I) occurs—

(aa) not earlier than 21 days before the beginning date specified in the applicable grazing permit or lease; or

(bb) not later than 21 days after the ending date specified in the applicable grazing permit or lease; and

(II) would not result in forage removal that exceeds the amount of active use specified in the applicable grazing permit or lease; and

(ii) the requirement that, in accordance with applicable law (including regulations)

and the terms and conditions of the applicable grazing permit or lease, an authorized grazing permittee or lessee using a variance under this paragraph shall develop and use a monitoring plan determined to be acceptable to the Secretary concerned as a reasonable way to track the effects of the variance on the long-term ecological health of the allotment on which the variance is used.

(b) **EFFECT ON EXISTING GRAZING PROGRAMS.**—Nothing in this section affects—

(1) any livestock grazing program carried out by the Secretary concerned as of the date of enactment of this Act; or

(2) any statutory authority for any program described in paragraph (1).

**SEC. 5118. WATER SOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAM.**

Section 303 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6542) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (1) through (7) as paragraphs (2) through (8), respectively;

(B) by inserting before paragraph (2) (as so redesignated) the following:

“(1) **ADJACENT LAND.**—The term ‘adjacent land’ means non-Federal land, including State, local, Indian, and private land, that is adjacent to, and within the same watershed as, National Forest System land on which a watershed protection and restoration project is carried out under this section.”;

(C) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated)—

(i) by redesignating subparagraphs (G) and (H) as subparagraphs (K) and (L), respectively; and

(ii) by inserting after subparagraph (F) the following:

“(G) an acequia association;

“(H) a local, regional, or other public entity that manages stormwater or wastewater resources or other related water infrastructure;

“(I) a land-grant mercedes; and

“(J) a local, regional, or other private entity that has water delivery authority.”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) by inserting “and adjacent land” before the period at the end;

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

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

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—A watershed protection and restoration project under the Program shall be designed—

“(A) to protect and restore watershed health, water supply and quality, a municipal or agricultural water supply system, and water-related infrastructure;

“(B) to protect and restore forest health from insect infestation and disease or wildfire; or

“(C) to advance any combination of the purposes described in subparagraphs (A) and (B).

“(3) **PRIORITIES.**—In selecting watershed protection and restoration projects under the Program, the Secretary shall give priority to projects that would—

“(A) provide risk management benefits associated with drought, wildfire, post-wildfire conditions, extreme weather events, flooding, landslides, resilience to climate change, and watershed and fire resilience, including minimizing risks to watershed health, water supply and quality, and water-related infrastructure, including municipal and agricultural water supply systems;

“(B) support aquatic restoration and conservation efforts that complement existing or planned forest restoration or wildfire risk reduction efforts;

“(C) provide quantifiable benefits to water supply or quality and include the use of nature-based solutions, such as restoring wetland and riparian ecosystems;

“(D) include—

“(i) partners with demonstrated capacity to, and success in, designing and implementing ecological restoration projects, wildfire risk-reduction efforts, or post-wildfire restoration projects; or

“(ii) in the case of communities that have historically lacked access to adequate resources, partners with a strong likelihood of success in designing and implementing a watershed protection and restoration project; and

“(E) include—

“(i) a contribution of funds or in-kind support from non-Federal partners in an amount greater than the amount required under subsection (g)(2); or

“(ii) such other characteristics as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

“(4) **CONDITIONS FOR PROJECTS ON ADJACENT LAND.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—No project or activity may be carried out under this section on adjacent land, unless the owner of the adjacent land provides express support for, and is a willing and engaged partner in, carrying out that project or activity.

“(B) **EFFECT.**—Nothing in this section authorizes any change in—

“(i) the ownership of adjacent land on which a project or activity is carried out under this section; or

“(ii) the management of adjacent land on which a project or activity is carried out under this section, except during the carrying out of that project or activity.”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “agreements with” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following:

“agreements with end water users to protect and restore the condition of National Forest watersheds and adjacent land that provide water to—

“(A) end water users; or

“(B) end water users to protect and restore the condition of National Forest watersheds and adjacent land that provide water for the benefit of another end water user.”;

(B) in paragraph (2)—

(i) in subparagraph (C), by striking “or” at the end;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (D) as subparagraph (E); and

(iii) by inserting after subparagraph (C) the following:

“(D) in the case of an agreement with a State, a county, or an Indian tribe for a project carried out on National Forest System land—

“(i) a good neighbor agreement entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a); or

“(ii) an agreement or contract entered into under the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-278; 118 Stat. 868); or”;

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(3) **COOPERATION WITH NON-FEDERAL PARTNERS.**—The Secretary shall cooperate, to the maximum extent practicable, with non-Federal partners in carrying out assessments, planning, project design, and project implementation under this section.”;

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) **REQUIREMENTS.**—A water source management plan shall be—

“(A) designed to protect and restore ecological integrity (as defined in section 219.19 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (as in effect on the date of enactment of this subparagraph));

“(B) based on the best available scientific information; and

“(C) conducted in a manner consistent with the forest plan applicable to the Na-

tional Forest System land on which the watershed protection and restoration project is carried out.”; and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(4) **REDUCING REDUNDANCY.**—An existing watershed plan, such as a watershed protection and restoration action plan developed under section 304(a)(3), or other applicable watershed planning documents approved by the Secretary may be used as the basis for a water source management plan under this subsection.”;

(5) in subsection (e)(1), by striking “purpose of” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting “purpose of advancing any of the purposes described in subsection (b)(2).”; and

(6) in subsection (g)—

(A) in paragraph (2)—

(i) by striking “at least equal to” and inserting “not less than 20 percent of”;

(ii) by striking “The Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(B) **WAIVER.**—The Secretary may waive the requirement under subparagraph (A) at the discretion of the Secretary.”;

(B) in paragraph (4)—

(i) in subparagraph (B), by striking “fiscal years 2019 through 2023” and inserting “fiscal years 2025 through 2031”;

(ii) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (D); and

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

“(C) **SET-ASIDE FOR PARTNER PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING AND CAPACITY.**—Of the amounts made available under subparagraphs (A) and (B) to carry out this section for each fiscal year, the Secretary shall use not less than 10 percent for non-Federal partner technical assistance participation and capacity-building efforts in developing or implementing a water source management plan under subsection (d).”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(5) **IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS.**—The Secretary may include the value of forest restoration and watershed improvement work implemented on adjacent land in the project area in determining in-kind contributions to a project from non-Federal partners under paragraph (4)(A).”.

**SEC. 5119. WATERSHED CONDITION FRAMEWORK TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.**

Section 304(a) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6543(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (3)(A), by inserting “protection and” before “restoration”;

(2) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(3) in paragraph (6), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following:

“(7) to ensure that management activities and authorizations do not result in long-term degradation of watershed health of any watershed in a National Forest.”.

**SEC. 5120. TRIBAL FOREST PROTECTION MANAGEMENT.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 8703 of the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (25 U.S.C. 3115b) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “**MANAGEMENT DEMONSTRATION PROJECT**” and inserting “**PROTECTION MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS**”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c);

(3) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking “demonstration”;

(B) by striking “federally recognized”;

(C) by striking “programs of” and inserting “activities and projects under”;

(D) by inserting “or compacts” after “contracts”;

(E) by striking “5304 et seq.” and inserting “5301 et seq.”; and

(F) by striking the subsection designation and heading and all that follows through “and the Secretary” and inserting the following:

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

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

“(b) ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS.—The Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior”;

(4) in subsection (c) (as so redesignated)—  
(A) by striking “contract or project” each place it appears and inserting “contract, compact, or project”;

(B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “subsection (a)” and inserting “subsection (b)”;

(C) in paragraph (1), by striking “5304 et seq.” and inserting “5301 et seq.”; and

(5) by adding at the end the following:  
“(d) TORT CLAIMS PROCEDURE.—For purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code, an employee of an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization that enters into an agreement, contract, or compact under subsection (b) shall be considered an employee of the Forest Service while carrying out activities and projects on behalf of the Forest Service pursuant to that agreement, contract, or compact.

“(e) PUBLICATION OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary and the Secretary of the Interior shall—

“(1) not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this subsection, make available, in an easily accessible format and location, on the website of the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, respectively, a list of the types of activities and projects that Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations may enter into agreements, contracts, or compacts to perform under subsection (b); and

“(2) update the list under paragraph (1) as necessary.”

(b) TRIBAL FOREST PROTECTION ACT OF 2004 AMENDMENTS.—Section 2 of the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (25 U.S.C. 3115a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking paragraph (2) and inserting the following:

“(2) INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND.—The term ‘Indian forest land or rangeland’ means—

“(A) land that—

“(i) is held in trust, or subject to a restriction against alienation, by the United States for an Indian Tribe or a member of an Indian Tribe; and

“(ii)(I) is Indian forest land (as defined in section 304 of the National Indian Forest Resources Management Act (25 U.S.C. 3103)); or

“(II)(aa) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

“(bb) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration; and

“(B) land that—

“(i) is in the State of Alaska and held by an Alaska Native Corporation pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.); and

“(ii)(I) has a cover of grasses, brush, or any similar vegetation; or

“(II) formerly had a forest cover or vegetative cover that is capable of restoration.”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “450b” and inserting “5304”;

(C) by adding at the end the following:

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

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by striking “INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND” and inserting “OR RESTORE INDIAN FOREST LAND OR RANGELAND AND FEDERAL LAND OF SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or Tribal organization” after “Indian tribe” each place it appears;

(ii) by striking “a project to protect Indian forest land or rangeland (including a project to restore Federal land that borders on or is adjacent to Indian forest land or rangeland)” and inserting “activities and projects to protect or restore Indian forest land or rangeland or Federal land”;

(iii) by striking “activities described” and inserting “activities and projects described”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by inserting “or Tribal organization” after “Indian tribe”;

(D) by striking paragraph (3) and inserting the following:

“(3) ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTS.—Under an agreement or contract entered into under paragraph (2), the Indian tribe or Tribal organization may carry out activities and projects to achieve land management goals for—

“(A) Federal land that is—

“(i) under the jurisdiction of the Secretary; and

“(ii) consistent with the criteria described in subsection (c); and

“(B) Indian forest land or rangeland.”;

(3) in subsection (c)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting “for Federal Land” after “Criteria”;

(B) by striking “an Indian tribe,” in the matter preceding paragraph (1) and all that follows through “Indian tribe—” in the matter preceding subparagraph (A) of paragraph (2) and inserting the following: “Federal land, are whether—

“(1) the Federal land has a special geographic, historical, or cultural significance to the Indian tribe or Tribal organization and—”;

(C) in paragraph (1) (as so designated)—

(i) in subparagraph (A), by striking clause (i) and inserting the following:

“(i) Indian forest land or rangeland; or”;

(ii) in subparagraph (B), by striking “restoration activities;” and inserting “or watershed restoration activities; and”;

(D) by redesignating paragraph (3) as paragraphs (2);

(E) in paragraph (2) (as so redesignated)—

(i) by inserting “and projects” after “activities”;

(ii) by inserting “or Tribal organization” after “Indian tribe”;

(iii) by striking “subject land; and” and inserting “Federal land.”;

(F) by striking paragraph (4);

(4) in subsection (d)—

(A) in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “or Tribal organization” after “Indian tribe”;

(B) in paragraph (3), by striking “Indian tribe for” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “Indian tribe or Tribal organization for the purpose of developing a strategy for protecting or restoring—

“(A) Indian forest land or rangeland; or

“(B) Federal land that has a special geographic, historical, or cultural significance to the Indian tribe or Tribal organization.”;

(5) in subsection (e), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by inserting “or Tribal organization” after “Indian tribe” each place it appears;

(6) in subsection (g), by striking “date of enactment of this Act” and inserting “date of enactment of the Fix Our Forests Act”;

(7) by adding at the end the following:

“(h) FEDERAL TORTS CLAIMS ACT COVERAGE.—While carrying out activities and projects on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service pursuant to an agreement or contract under this section, an employee of an Indian tribe or Tribal organization shall be considered to be an employee of the Bureau of Land Management or the Forest Service, respectively, for purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code.”

#### SEC. 5121. ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL WILDLAND FIRE RESEARCH CENTERS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

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

(A) the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Natural Resources, the Committee on Agriculture, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives; and

(C) any other committee of Congress with the authority to facilitate the development of wildland fire research.

(2) CAREER PATHWAY.—The term “career pathway” has the meaning given that term in section 3 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3102).

(3) FEDERAL SCIENCE AGENCY.—The term “Federal science agency” has the meaning given that term in section 103(f) of the America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 (42 U.S.C. 6623(f)).

(4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term “institution of higher education” has the meaning given that term in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).

(5) LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.—The term “land-grant colleges and universities” has the meaning given that term in section 1404 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977 (7 U.S.C. 3103).

(6) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The term “minority-serving institution” means an institution defined in any of paragraphs (1) through (7) of section 371(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q(a)).

(7) REGIONAL CENTER.—The term “regional center” means a regional wildland fire research center established under subsection (c)(1).

(8) 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).

(9) WILDLAND FIRE.—The term “wildland fire” means any non-structure fire that occurs in vegetation or natural fuels and includes wildfires originating from an unplanned ignition or prescribed fire.

(10) WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.—The term “wildland fire management agencies” means—

(A) the Forest Service;

(B) the Bureau of Land Management;

(C) the National Park Service;

(D) the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(E) the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(11) WILDLAND FIRE RESEARCH.—The term “wildland fire research” means research to better understand—

(A) the causes and consequences of wildland fires, including antecedent and contemporaneous factors that increase the risk of catastrophic events;

(B) the spread and behavior of wildland fires, including fires in the wildland-urban interface;

(C) the efficacy of mitigation strategies for wildland fires;

(D) the impact of wildland fires on public health, safety, and the environment;

(E) the rehabilitation and restoration of affected ecosystems after wildland fires; and

(F) the development of mitigation strategies and techniques to improve the safety of wildland fire managers and firefighters.

(b) COMPETITIVE PROCESS.—The Secretaries shall establish a competitive process for the selection and establishment of regional wildland fire research centers in accordance with subsection (c).

(c) SELECTION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL CENTERS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall select not fewer than 8 institutions of higher education or land-grant colleges and universities at which to establish, in accordance with the timeline described in paragraph (2), regional centers to coordinate the development of wildland fire research.

(2) TIMELINE.—In establishing regional centers under paragraph (1), the Secretaries shall establish—

(A) as soon as practicable after the date of enactment of this Act, subject to the availability of appropriations, a pilot program under which not fewer than 2 regional centers shall be established; and

(B) not later than 2 years after the date on which the pilot program is established under subparagraph (A), the remaining regional centers.

(3) CRITERIA FOR SELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—In establishing a regional center at an institution of higher education or land-grant college or university under this section, the Secretaries shall prioritize the selection of institutions, colleges, or universities that meet not fewer than one of the following criteria:

(i) Have existing programs of record in wildland fire research.

(ii) Have existing partnerships with research institutions of the Federal Government and other academic institutions and entities relating to wildland fire research.

(iii) Participate in or lead a program under the Joint Fire Science Program.

(iv) Are a minority-serving institution.

(B) REGIONS.—The Secretaries shall establish not fewer than one regional center in each of the following regions of the United States, as defined by the Secretaries:

(i) Alaska.

(ii) California.

(iii) The Pacific Northwest.

(iv) The Pacific Islands.

(v) The Plains and Northeast.

(vi) The Rockies.

(vii) The Southeast.

(viii) The Southwest.

(4) PURPOSE.—Each regional center, with respect to the region covered by the regional center, shall—

(A) to the extent practical, coordinate research with other wildland fire research entities, such as other academic institutions, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the National Science Foundation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Department of Energy, the research and development program of the Forest Service, the National Laboratories, the

United States Geological Survey, and State and regional research organizations;

(B) improve the understanding of wildland fire through wildland fire research that can be applied by wildland fire management agencies;

(C) develop technologies and other tools to understand, monitor, and predict wildland fire, including—

(i) models to predict fire potential and the spread and behavior of wildland fire and smoke;

(ii) models to predict how vegetation will respond to changes in the environment and wildland fire;

(iii) the integration of technologies to predict the spread and behavior of wildland fire and smoke in as near-real-time as possible; and

(iv) other innovations to be integrated into operational decision support systems relating to wildland fire, such as the Wildland Fire Decision Support System and the Inter-agency Fuel Treatment Decision Support System;

(D) develop technologies and other tools to safely support land management activities to reduce the severity of wildland fire;

(E) leverage predictive capabilities to reduce the impact of smoke on communities and wildfire incident management teams, including wildland firefighters;

(F) improve the understanding of post-fire risk to the landscape, including flash flooding potential and watershed impacts;

(G) test and operate models to support land management decision-making, including through—

(i) operating models to support management of wildland fire and vegetation;

(ii) the demonstration of integration technologies to support management of wildland fire in as near-real-time as possible; and

(iii) the incorporation of decision science and social science that examines the perception and adoption of information related to wildland fire risk;

(H) develop a career pathway training program with respect to carrying out wildland fire research;

(I) develop data management protocols to allow for full and open exchange of data pursuant to the principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability (commonly referred to as the “FAIR principles”) and archive and access that data;

(J) develop training programs for prescribed fire implementation; and

(K) make its work and data fully and openly available.

(d) ADVISORY BOARDS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In accordance with chapter 10 of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the “Federal Advisory Committee Act”), the Secretary shall establish at each regional center an advisory board, to be known as the “Regional Advisory Board”, to carry out the duties described in paragraph (4).

(2) COMPOSITION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Each Regional Advisory Board shall consist of members, who shall be from, or have responsibility covering, the region covered by the relevant regional center, including at minimum—

(i) one regional representative from each wildland fire management agency, appointed by that agency;

(ii) one representative from a State government agency from each State located in that region with expertise in forestry and wildland fire mitigation and management, appointed by the Governor of that State;

(iii) one representative from an Indian Tribe or Tribal organization from that region with expertise in forestry and wildland fire mitigation and management on Tribal or

Federal land, appointed by the Secretaries; and

(iv) additional representatives elected under subparagraph (B)(ii).

(B) ELECTED MEMBERSHIP.—

(i) SUBCOMMITTEE.—Each Regional Advisory Board shall solicit and approve, on at least an annual basis, nominations for individuals with operational expertise in wildland fire mitigation and management to serve as a representative on a subcommittee to the Regional Advisory Board for the purposes of clause (ii), composed of not more than 15 individuals, including representatives from, as applicable—

(I) institutions of higher education or land-grant colleges and universities;

(II) nongovernmental organizations;

(III) private industry;

(IV) the wildland firefighter community, including organizations that represent the interests of wildland firefighters; and

(V) Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes established under section 5(a) of the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act of 2004 (16 U.S.C. 6704(a)).

(ii) ELECTION.—The subcommittee described in clause (i) for a Regional Advisory Board may elect a member or members of the subcommittee to serve as a member of the Regional Advisory Board under subparagraph (A)(iv) for a 2-year term.

(3) COMPENSATION.—Each member of a Regional Advisory Board shall serve on a voluntary basis without compensation.

(4) DUTIES.—Each Regional Advisory Board shall—

(A) ensure and support the coordination of wildland fire research between the relevant regional center and Federal and State land management agencies in that region;

(B) communicate the operational needs of Federal and State land management agencies and wildland fire management agencies in that region to the relevant regional center and to the Board governing the Wildfire Intelligence Center appointed under section 5102(f);

(C) advise, in coordination with the relevant regional center, on research goals and objectives; and

(D) assist the relevant regional center with the dissemination of research outputs and data to the Board governing the Wildfire Intelligence Center appointed under section 5102(f) and Federal and State land management agencies and wildland fire management agencies in that region.

(5) MEETINGS.—Each Regional Advisory Board shall meet quarterly.

(6) TERM.—Unless specified otherwise, a member of a Regional Advisory Board shall serve for a term of 4 years.

(7) VACANCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—A vacancy on a Regional Advisory Board—

(i) shall not affect the powers of the Regional Advisory Board; and

(ii) shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment was made by not later than 180 days after the date on which the vacancy occurs.

(B) FILLING UNEXPIRED TERM.—An individual chosen to fill a vacancy shall be appointed for the unexpired term of the member replaced.

(e) REPORT ON WILDLAND FIRE RESEARCH.—Not later than each of 2 years and 4 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in consultation with the Board governing the Wildfire Intelligence Center appointed under section 5102(f), shall submit to the appropriate committees of Congress a report describing—

(1) the progress each regional center has made in the development of wildland fire research; and

(2) recommendations to improve wildland fire research.

(f) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the requirements of this section, the Secretaries shall consult with—

- (1) Federal science agencies; and
- (2) the Office of Science and Technology Policy.

**SEC. 5122. CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND AGREEMENTS TO CARRY OUT CERTAIN ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION ACTIVITIES.**

Section 40804 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592a) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) CONTRACTS, GRANTS, AND AGREEMENTS.—To carry out the ecosystem restoration activities described in subsection (b), the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, may enter into contracts, grants, or agreements, as appropriate, with State agencies, Indian Tribes, institutions of higher education (as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a))), and multistate coalitions—

“(1) for the collection and maintenance of native plant materials, including material from managed seed orchards; and

“(2) for the production of native plant materials for revegetation.”.

**SEC. 5123. REFORESTATION OF LAND DESTROYED BY HERMIT'S PEAK/CALF CANYON FIRE.**

Section 104(d)(4) of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire Assistance Act (division G of Public Law 117-180; 136 Stat. 2172) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(D) REFORESTATION.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding paragraph (1)(B), subject to clause (ii), a claim that is paid for injury under this Act may include damages resulting from the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire for otherwise uncompensated resource losses for costs of reasonable efforts, as determined by the Administrator, incurred by the State of New Mexico not later than December 31, 2030, to design and construct a center for the purpose of researching, developing, and generating native seedlings.

“(ii) LIMITATION.—The payment of a claim under this Act may not include amounts to design or construct a center described in clause (i) until after all claims by an injured person that are pending on the date of enactment of this subparagraph are paid or otherwise resolved.”.

**SEC. 5124. CONTRACT PREFERENCE FOR LOCAL CONTRACTORS FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS FUEL REDUCTION PROJECTS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Title I of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 is amended—

(1) by redesignating sections 107 and 108 (16 U.S.C. 6517, 6518) as sections 108 and 109, respectively; and

(2) by inserting after section 106 (16 U.S.C. 6516) the following:

**“SEC. 107. CONTRACT PREFERENCE FOR LOCAL CONTRACTORS FOR CERTAIN HAZARDOUS FUEL REDUCTION PROJECTS.**

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) APPROPRIATE LOCAL CONTRACTOR.—The term ‘appropriate local contractor’ means an entity that carries out, pursuant to a contract or agreement, 1 or more authorized projects located—

“(A) in a State in which—

“(i) the entity has its principal place of business, as certified by the entity or an individual representing the entity; and

“(ii) not fewer than 26 percent of the total workforce assigned to the applicable contract or agreement (including subcontractors at any tier) will reside, as certified by the entity or an individual representing the entity; or

“(B) within a 60-mile radius of the State in which the entity is registered as a business or has its principal place of business, as certified by the entity or an individual representing the entity.

“(2) AUTHORIZED PROJECT.—The term ‘authorized project’ includes any activity carried out pursuant to—

“(A) an authorized hazardous fuel reduction project; or

“(B) a fireshed management project (as defined in section 5002 of the Fix Our Forests Act).

“(3) SECRETARY.—The term ‘Secretary’ means the Secretary of Agriculture, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

“(b) CONTRACT PREFERENCE.—Effective beginning on the date of enactment of the Fix Our Forests Act, the Secretary shall give preference in awarding a contract to carry out an authorized project in a State to an appropriate local contractor, to the maximum extent practicable.

“(c) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of the Fix Our Forests Act, and not less frequently than annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to Congress a report that includes—

“(1) a quantitative analysis of the number and percentage of contracts awarded to appropriate local contractors, the total dollar value of those contracts, and an assessment of the economic impact of the contract preference under subsection (b) on local employment and contractor capacity;

“(2) a description of the reasons for awarding a contract to carry out an authorized project in a State to an individual or entity that is not an appropriate local contractor; and

“(3) a description of the implementation by the Secretary of this section.

“(d) MONITORING AND EVALUATION.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish a monitoring and evaluation process—

“(A) to assess compliance with the requirements of this section, including the contract preference under subsection (b); and

“(B) to support the reports required under subsection (c).

“(2) PARTICIPANTS.—The process described in paragraph (1) may include participation by—

“(A) any cooperating governmental agencies, including Tribal governments; and

“(B) any other interested groups or individuals.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents contained in section 1(b) of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (Public Law 108-148; 117 Stat. 1887) is amended by striking the items relating to sections 107 and 108 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 107. Contract preference for local contractors for certain hazardous fuel reduction projects.

“Sec. 108. Effect of title.

“Sec. 109. Authorization of appropriations.”.

**Subtitle C—Litigation Reform**

**SEC. 5131. LITIGATION REFORM.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) AGENCY DOCUMENT.—The term ‘agency document’, with respect to a fireshed management project, means a record of decision, decision memorandum, environmental document, or programmatic environmental document.

(2) COVERED AGENCY ACTION.—The term ‘covered agency action’ means—

(A) the establishment of a fireshed management project by an agency;

(B) the application of a categorical exclusion to a fireshed management project;

(C) the preparation of any agency document for a fireshed management project; and

(D) any other agency action as part of a fireshed management project.

(3) NEPA TERMS.—The terms ‘categorical exclusion’, ‘environmental document’, and ‘programmatic environmental document’ have the meanings given those terms in section 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e).

(b) LIMITATIONS ON JUDICIAL REVIEW.—

(1) LIMITATIONS ON INJUNCTIVE RELIEF.—

(A) TEMPORARY DELAY OF COVERED AGENCY ACTION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a covered agency action, a court shall not issue a preliminary injunction against such covered agency action unless the court determines that—

(i) subject to subparagraph (C), such preliminary injunction is in the public interest;

(ii) the balance of equities favors the plaintiff;

(iii) the plaintiff is likely to succeed on the merits; and

(iv) the plaintiff is likely to suffer irreparable injury in the absence of preliminary relief.

(B) PERMANENT LIMIT ON AGENCY ACTION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a covered agency action, a court shall not issue a permanent injunction against such covered agency action, or an order to otherwise permanently limit such covered agency action, unless a court determines that—

(i) subject to subparagraph (C), such permanent injunction or order is in the public interest;

(ii) the balance of equities favors the plaintiff;

(iii) the plaintiff has suffered or will suffer irreparable injury; and

(iv) no adequate remedy is available at law.

(C) PUBLIC INTEREST DETERMINATION.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In determining under subparagraphs (A) and (B) whether a preliminary or permanent injunction against, or other order with respect to, a covered agency action is in the public interest, the considerations of the court shall include—

(I) the purpose for which an agency is undertaking the fireshed management project relating to such covered agency action;

(II) the likelihood that the fireshed management project will achieve the stated purpose of the fireshed management project; and

(III) the short- and long-term effects of proceeding with the covered agency action, as compared to delaying or limiting such covered agency action, including the potential for significant increases in wildfire risk or severity and significant threats to the health of the ecosystem.

(ii) WEIGHT OF PUBLIC INTEREST FACTOR.—In determining whether to issue any injunction or order under subparagraph (A) or (B), a court shall give significant, but not necessarily dispositive, weight to its consideration of whether such order is in the public interest.

(2) REMAND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, in the case of a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a covered agency action, if the court remands the matter to the agency, the court shall remand with instructions to carry out, during the 180-day period beginning on the date of such remand, such additional actions as may be necessary to redress any cognizable harm giving rise to such claim.

(B) VACATUR.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In remanding a matter to an agency under subparagraph (A), the court shall remand with vacatur only if—

(I) the seriousness of any deficiencies in the covered agency action weigh in favor of vacatur; and

(II) the court determines that any disruptive consequences of vacatur, including the short- and long-term effects of vacating the covered agency action or any part of such covered agency action, do not outweigh the justification for vacatur.

(ii) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making the determination described in clause (i)(II), the court shall consider whether vacatur would cause—

(I) any significant increases in wildfire risk or severity, and

(II) any significant threats to the health of the ecosystem.

(C) EFFECT OF REMAND ON AGENCY.—In the case of a covered agency action subject to remand without vacatur, or with partial vacatur, pursuant to this paragraph, the agency may—

(i) continue to carry out such covered agency action, or such parts of the covered agency action as are not vacated, to the extent that doing so does not interfere with any additional actions required pursuant to subparagraph (A); and

(ii) use any format, as appropriate, to correct an agency document (including a supplemental environmental document, memorandum, or errata sheet), provided that such format is appropriate to the nature of the deficiency.

(3) PRESERVATION OF AUTHORITY.—Nothing in this section alters, limits, or displaces the authority of a court to review a covered agency action under section 706(2) of title 5, United States Code.

(c) LIMITATIONS ON CLAIMS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a claim arising under Federal law seeking judicial review of a covered agency action shall be barred unless—

(1) with respect to an agency document or the application of a categorical exclusion noticed in the Federal Register, such claim is filed not later than 150 days after the date of publication of a notice in the Federal Register of agency intent to carry out the fire management project relating to such covered agency document or application, unless a shorter period is specified in such Federal law; or

(2) in the case of an agency document or the application of a categorical exclusion not described in paragraph (1), if such agency document or application is otherwise published or noticed, such claim is filed not later than 150 days after the date that is the earlier of—

(A) the date on which such agency document or application is published; and

(B) the date on which such agency document or application is noticed.

#### SEC. 5132. CONSULTATION ON FOREST PLANS.

(a) FOREST SERVICE PLANS.—Section 6(d)(2) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(d)(2)) is amended to read as follows:

“(2) NO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION REQUIRED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not be required to reinstate consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)) or section 402.16 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), on a land management plan approved, amended, or revised under this section when—

“(A) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

“(B) new information reveals effects of the land management plan that may affect a species listed or critical habitat designated

under that Act in a manner or to an extent not previously considered.”.

(b) BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS.—Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1712) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(g) NO ADDITIONAL CONSULTATION REQUIRED UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary shall not be required to reinstate consultation under section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)) or section 402.16 of title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (or a successor regulation), on a land use plan approved, amended, or revised under this section when—

“(1) a new species is listed or critical habitat is designated under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.); or

“(2) new information reveals effects of the land use plan that may affect a species listed or critical habitat designated under that Act in a manner or to an extent not previously considered.”.

#### Subtitle D—Prescribed Fire

#### SEC. 5141. PRESCRIBED FIRE ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES.

(a) DEFINITION OF PRESCRIBED FIRE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In this section, the term “prescribed fire” means a fire deliberately ignited to burn wildland fuels in a natural or modified state—

(A) under specified environmental conditions that are intended to allow the fire—

(i) to be confined to a predetermined area; and

(ii) to produce the fireline intensity and rate of spread required to attain planned resource management objectives; and

(B) in accordance with applicable law (including regulations).

(2) EXCLUSION.—In this section, the term “prescribed fire” does not include a fire that is ignited for the primary purpose of pile burning.

(3) CULTURAL BURNING.—In this section, the term “prescribed fire” includes specified cultural burning activities that an Indian Tribe designates for treatment as prescribed fire for the purposes of this section.

(b) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary concerned may carry out eligible activities described in paragraph (2) for hazardous fuels management with respect to land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned.

(2) DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES.—The activities referred to in paragraph (1) are—

(A) with respect to prescribed fires on Federal land, or on non-Federal land if the Secretary concerned determines that such activities would benefit resources on Federal land—

(i) entering into procurement contracts or cooperative agreements for prescribed fire activities;

(ii) issuing grants from an existing grant program to a State, Indian Tribe, local government, prescribed fire council, prescribed burn association, or nonprofit organization for the implementation of prescribed fires, including—

(I) carrying out necessary environmental reviews;

(II) carrying out any site preparation necessary for implementing prescribed fires; and

(III) conducting any required pre-ignition cultural and environmental surveys; and

(iii) conducting outreach to the public, Indian Tribes and beneficiaries, and adjacent landowners;

(B) implementing prescribed fires on non-Federal land, if the Secretary concerned determines that the prescribed fire would benefit Federal land, including—

(i) carrying out necessary environmental reviews;

(ii) carrying out any site preparation necessary for implementing prescribed fires; and

(iii) conducting any required pre-ignition cultural and environmental surveys;

(C) providing training for prescribed fire and basic smoke management practices to Federal employees and cooperators;

(D) conducting post-prescribed fire activities, such as monitoring for hazard trees or reignitions and invasive species management; and

(E) providing technical or financial assistance to a State, Indian Tribe, local government, prescribed fire council, prescribed burn association, or nonprofit organization for the purpose of providing training for prescribed fire or basic smoke management practices, consistent with any standards developed by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group or State-prescribed fire standards.

(3) PRIORITIZATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (B), the Secretary concerned shall coordinate with the other Secretary concerned, State and local government agencies, Indian Tribes, and applicable nongovernmental organizations to establish prioritization criteria for carrying out the activities described in paragraph (2).

(B) REQUIREMENT.—In establishing criteria under subparagraph (A), the Secretary concerned shall give priority to a project that is—

(i) implemented across a large contiguous area;

(ii) cross-boundary in nature;

(iii) located in an area that is—

(I) within or adjacent to the wildland-urban interface and identified as a priority area in a statewide forest action plan, fire assessment, or community wildfire protection plan; or

(II) identified by the Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the appropriate Indian Tribe, as important to the protection of a Tribal trust resource or the reserved or treaty rights of an Indian Tribe identified by the Secretary concerned, in consultation with the appropriate Indian Tribe;

(iv) on land that is at high or very high risk of experiencing a wildfire that would be difficult to suppress;

(v) in an area that is designated as critical habitat and in need of ecological restoration or enhancement that can be achieved with the aid of prescribed fire; or

(vi) supportive of potential operational delineations or strategic response zones.

(c) POLICIES AND PRACTICES.—The Secretary concerned, in coordination with State and local governments and Indian Tribes, shall develop a prescribed fire operational strategy for each region of the National Forest System or the Department of the Interior, as applicable, that describes—

(1) the fire deficit, by region; and

(2) staffing and funding needs to address the fire deficit described in paragraph (1).

#### SEC. 5142. HUMAN RESOURCES.

(a) COMPETENCIES FOR FIREFIGHTERS.—The Secretaries, in coordination with the Fire Executive Council, shall task the National Wildfire Coordinating Group with the duty to adjust training requirements to obtain a certification to serve in a supervisory role for a prescribed fire and any other positions determined to be necessary by the Secretaries—

(1) in order to reduce the time required to obtain such a certification; and

(2) such that significant experience, gained exclusively during a prescribed fire, is required to obtain such a certification.

(b) ENHANCING INTEROPERABILITY BETWEEN FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL PRACTITIONERS.—

(1) QUALIFICATION DATABASES AND DISPATCH SYSTEMS.—The Secretaries shall establish, to

the extent practicable, a collaborative process to create mechanisms for non-Federal fire practitioners to be included in prescribed fire and wildfire resource ordering and reimbursement processes.

(2) **PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS.**—The Secretaries may—

(A) develop partnership agreements for prescribed fire with all relevant State, Federal, Tribal, university, and nongovernmental entities that choose to be included in resource ordering and reimbursement processes under paragraph (1);

(B) create agreements and structures necessary to include non-Federal and other non-traditional partners in direct work with Federal agencies to address prescribed fires; and

(C) treat any prescribed fire practitioner meeting the National Wildfire Coordinating Group standards as eligible to be included in statewide participating agreements.

**SEC. 5143. LIABILITY OF PRESCRIBED FIRE MANAGERS.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **COVERED ACTIVITY.**—The term “covered activity” means an activity carried out on Federal land directly related to a wildland fire, prescribed fire, or prescribed fire with cultural objectives in the course of executing a Federal action.

(2) **COVERED ENTITY.**—The term “covered entity” means a non-Federal entity that—

(A) carries out a covered activity; and

(B) is acting—

(i) under the direct supervision of a Federal employee; and

(ii) within the scope of a contract or agreement in carrying out that covered activity.

(b) **INDEMNITY OF FEDERAL AND TRIBAL EMPLOYEES.**—The Secretaries, in coordination with the Attorney General, shall develop a voluntary training course for employees involved in covered activities describing—

(1) liability protections afforded to those employees when acting within the scope of their employment;

(2) the limits on any liability protections under paragraph (1); and

(3) reimbursements available for qualified employees for professional liability insurance under section 636 of division A of Public Law 104–208 (5 U.S.C. prec. 5941 note).

(c) **INDEMNITY OF OTHER COOPERATORS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Effective beginning on the date of enactment of this Act, a covered entity shall be considered to be an employee of the Federal Government for purposes of chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”), while that covered entity carries out any covered activity.

(2) **GUIDANCE.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in consultation with the Attorney General, shall issue guidance regarding the necessary provisions of, and implementation requirements for, contracts or agreements that would extend liability protection to covered entities pursuant to paragraph (1).

(3) **REIMBURSEMENT.**—Beginning in the first fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall request, through annual appropriations, funds sufficient to reimburse the Treasury for any claims paid during the preceding fiscal year pursuant to paragraph (1).

(d) **EFFECT.**—Nothing in this section limits or otherwise affects the application of—

(1) any statutory or judicial immunity to any Federal employee;

(2) chapter 171 of title 28, United States Code (commonly known as the “Federal Tort Claims Act”), to any Federal employee; or

(3) section 314 of Public Law 101–512 (25 U.S.C. 5321 note).

**SEC. 5144. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW.**

(a) **SMOKE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.**—

(1) **POLICY.**—The Secretaries shall ensure that policies, training, and programs of the Secretaries are consistent with this subsection—

(A) to facilitate greater use of prescribed fire in a safe and responsible manner, with appropriate monitoring to prevent prescribed fires from exceeding containment;

(B) to address public health and safety, including impacts from smoke from wildfires and prescribed fires; and

(C) to improve and leverage smoke modeling and smoke monitoring using existing systems and programs, including the Interagency Wildland Fire Air Quality Response Program established under section 1114(f) of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (43 U.S.C. 1748b–1(f)), to provide consistent forecasts on air quality impacts from wildfire and prescribed fire.

(2) **COORDINATION AMONG FEDERAL, TRIBAL, AND STATE AIR QUALITY AGENCIES AND FEDERAL, TRIBAL, AND STATE LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES.**—To facilitate the use of prescribed fire on Federal, State, Tribal, and private land, the Executive Director, in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency, Federal and State land management agencies, shall coordinate with State, Tribal, and local air quality agencies that regulate smoke under the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7401 et seq.)—

(A) to the maximum extent practicable, to provide State, Tribal, and local air quality agencies with guidance, data, imagery, or modeling to support the development of exceptional event demonstrations for prescribed fire in accordance with sections 50.14 and 51.930 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

(B) to develop archives and automated tools to provide State, Tribal, and local air quality agencies with the data, imagery, and modeling under subparagraph (A);

(C) to provide technical assistance, best practices, or templates to States, Indian Tribes, and local governments for the use of the State, Indian Tribe, or local government in approving the use of prescribed fire under a State, Tribal, or local government smoke management program;

(D)(i) to promote basic smoke management practices and other best practices to protect the public from wildfire smoke;

(ii) to disseminate information about basic smoke management practices;

(iii) to educate landowners that use prescribed fire about the importance of—

(I) using basic smoke management practices; and

(II) including basic smoke management practices as a component of a prescribed fire plan;

(iv) to share with the public information, in coordination with other State and local agencies with responsibility for smoke monitoring or regulation, about measures that individuals can take to protect themselves from wildfire smoke; and

(v) to promote further development of smoke-ready efforts to allow communities to be prepared for smoke, including promotion of smoke planning in community wildfire protection plans; and

(E) to develop guidance and tools to streamline the demonstration of a clear causal relationship between prescribed fire smoke and a related exceedance or contribution to an exceedance of a national ambient air quality standard.

(3) **PROGRAMS AND RESEARCH.**—To address the public health and safety concerns of the expanded use of prescribed fire under this subtitle, the Secretaries, in coordination with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Pre-

vention, shall conduct research to improve or develop—

(A) wildfire smoke prediction models;

(B) smoke impact display tools for the public and decisionmakers, including for health impacts and transportation safety;

(C) appropriate, cost-effective, and consistent communications strategies to mitigate the impacts of smoke from prescribed fire on nearby communities;

(D) consistent nationally and scientifically supported messages regarding personal protection equipment for the public;

(E) prescribed fire activity tracking and emission inventory systems for planning and post-treatment accountability; and

(F) air quality and atmospheric deposition monitoring to understand smoke impacts of wildland fires.

(b) **DEVELOPMENT OF LANDSCAPE-SCALE FEDERAL PRESCRIBED FIRE PLANS.**—

(1) **INCLUSION OF LANDSCAPE-SCALE PRESCRIBED FIRE PLANS.**—The Secretary concerned, with respect to units of the National Forest System and Bureau of Land Management districts with existing prescribed fire programs—

(A) not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, shall determine which of those units or districts have landscape-scale prescribed fire plans;

(B) not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, shall—

(i) determine whether each plan described in subparagraph (A) requires revision; and

(ii) establish a schedule for the revision of each plan described in subparagraph (A) that requires revision; and

(C) may develop landscape-scale prescribed fire plans for any units or districts that do not have landscape-scale prescribed fire plans, as determined appropriate by the Secretary concerned.

(2) **ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE.**—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall—

(A) comply with—

(i) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.);

(ii) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.);

(iii) division A of subtitle III of title 54, United States Code; and

(iv) any other applicable laws; and

(B) consider the site-specific environmental consequences of the landscape-scale prescribed fire decisions under this subsection.

(3) **COLLABORATIVE DEVELOPMENT.**—In carrying out paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall collaborate with diverse actors from academia, the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management research and development offices, nongovernmental organizations, Indian Tribes, and other entities, as determined appropriate by the Secretary concerned.

(4) **REPORTS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary concerned shall submit to Congress a report describing the progress of the Secretary concerned in carrying out this subsection.

**SEC. 5145. COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS FOR PRESCRIBED FIRE.**

(a) **AGREEMENTS AND CONTRACTS.**—

(1) **DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.**—In this subsection, the term “eligible entity” means a State, an Indian Tribe, a unit of local government, a fire district, a nongovernmental organization, and a private entity.

(2) **AUTHORIZATION.**—The Secretaries may each enter into a cooperative agreement or contract with an eligible entity, for a period of not longer than 10 years, that authorizes the eligible entity—

(A) to coordinate, plan, or conduct a prescribed fire on Federal land; or

(B) to conduct a prescribed fire training event.

(3) SUBCONTRACTS.—A State, Indian Tribe, county, or eligible entity that enters into a cooperative agreement or contract under paragraph (1) may enter into a subcontract, in accordance with applicable employment and contracting laws and procedures of the State, Indian Tribe, county, or eligible entity—

(A) to conduct a prescribed fire on Federal land; or

(B) to conduct a prescribed fire training event pursuant to that cooperative agreement or contract.

(4) APPLICABLE LAW.—A prescribed fire conducted pursuant to this subsection shall be carried out on a project-by-project basis under—

(A) existing authorities of the applicable Federal agency responsible for the management of the applicable Federal land; and

(B) the employment and contracting laws of an Indian Tribe in accordance with paragraph (3), as applicable.

(5) PRESERVATION OF DECISION AUTHORITY.—An eligible entity may not carry out a project under this subsection pursuant to a cooperative agreement or contract without the prior written approval of each Secretary that entered into the cooperative agreement or contract.

(b) TRIBAL FOREST PROTECTION ACT OF 2004 AMENDMENTS.—The Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-278; 118 Stat. 868) is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“SEC. 4. TRIBAL PRESCRIBED BURN DEMONSTRATION PROJECT.**

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may enter into a contract or agreement with an Indian Tribe under this Act that provides for prescribed burns on Federal land pursuant to this section.

“(b) SCOPE.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a contract or agreement entered into under this section may—

“(1) use a burn plan that, on approval by the Secretary, allows multiple prescribed burns to be conducted in accordance with the burn plan to eliminate the need for individual burn plans for each prescribed burn and enable forest managers to have the flexibility to conduct prescribed burns when conditions allow; and

“(2) include terms that—

“(A) the Secretary may authorize an Indian Tribe to plan, coordinate, and execute prescribed burns on the behalf of the Secretary within the scope of the burn plan including applying the National Wildfire Coordinating Group standards for prescribed fire planning and implementation, to the extent authorized by Federal law;

“(B) any applicable Federal standard that requires a certain number of personnel to be on-hand during prescribed burns may be satisfied by regional Federal, State, or Tribal resources and personnel; and

“(C) where appropriate, the Secretary shall work with other Federal agencies and Tribal, State, and local governments to coordinate and communicate the shared objectives of the prescribed burn and ensure activities comply with applicable law and regulations.”

(c) COOPERATIVE FUNDS AND DEPOSITS ACT AMENDMENTS.—Public Law 94-148 (commonly known as the “Cooperative Funds and Deposits Act”) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence of the first section (16 U.S.C. 565a-1), by inserting “prescribed fire and prescribed fire training events,” after “including fire protection.”; and

(2) in section 2 (16 U.S.C. 565a-2), by inserting “, section 4 of the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-278; 118 Stat.

868), or section 5145(a) of the Fix Our Forests Act” after “authorized by section 1”.

**SEC. 5146. FACILITATING RESPONSIBLE USE OF PRESCRIBED FIRE.**

The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

(1) use all available resources to ensure prescribed burns conducted by the Forest Service are extinguished; and

(2) update the prescribed burn policies of the Forest Service to reflect the findings and recommendations included in the report of the Forest Service entitled “National Prescribed Fire Program Review” and dated September 2022.

**TITLE II—PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AT RISK**

**Subtitle A—Community Wildfire Risk Reduction**

**SEC. 5201. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries and the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, shall jointly establish an interagency program, to be known as the “Community Wildfire Risk Reduction Program” (referred to in this section as the “Program”), which shall consist of at least 1 representative from each of the following:

(1) The Office of Wildland Fire of the Department of the Interior.

(2) The National Park Service.

(3) The Bureau of Land Management.

(4) The United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

(5) The Bureau of Indian Affairs.

(6) The Forest Service.

(7) The Federal Emergency Management Agency.

(8) The United States Fire Administration.

(9) The National Institute of Standards and Technology.

(10) The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

(11) The National Wildfire Coordinating Group.

(b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of the Program is to support interagency coordination in reducing the risk of, and the damages resulting from, wildland fires in communities (including Tribal communities) in the wildland-urban interface through—

(1) advancing research and science in wildland fire resilience, land management, and risk reduction in the built environment, including support for non-Federal research partnerships;

(2) using current programming already available to Federal agencies;

(3) supporting the development of fire-resistant building methods, codes, and standards for community wildland fire risk reduction, including by promoting ignition-resistant construction, defensible space, and other measures demonstrated to effectively reduce wildland fire risks, as informed by the best available science;

(4) supporting adoption by Indian Tribes and local governmental entities of fire-resistant building methods, codes, and standards;

(5) supporting efforts by Indian Tribes and local governmental entities to address the effects of wildland fire on those communities, including property damages, air quality, and water quality;

(6) encouraging public-private partnerships to conduct hazardous fuels management activities near and within the wildland-urban interface, including creating or improving defensible space around structures;

(7) providing technical and financial assistance targeted towards communities (including Tribal communities) through stream-

lined and unified technical assistance and grant management mechanisms—

(A) to encourage critical risk-reduction measures on private property with high wildland fire risk exposure in those communities; and

(B) to mitigate costs for, and improve capacity among, those communities;

(8) reducing risk in the built environment by encouraging increased mitigation measures, such as the use of ignition-resistant construction and retrofitting materials;

(9) coordinating budgets among the agencies described in subsection (a) to identify gaps and reduce overlap;

(10) supporting the integration of wildland fire risk reduction measure and technical assistance into existing Federal programs, where practicable; and

(11) advancing the development of early wildfire detection and warning systems for rapid response and community alerts.

(c) DUTIES.—In carrying out this section, the representatives described in subsection (a) shall—

(1) meet not less frequently than once per year;

(2) ensure coordination, as appropriate, with other Federal agencies not identified in that subsection; and

(3) seek to gather feedback, as appropriate, from States, Indian Tribes, local governments, academic or research institutions, private entities, and such other entities as the Secretaries and the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, determine to be appropriate, to improve the function and operation of the Program.

(d) COORDINATION.—The Secretaries and the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, shall seek to ensure that States and Indian Tribes are invited and represented in meetings and other activities under this section.

(e) REPORT.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, and not less frequently than once every 2 years thereafter, the Program, acting through the representatives described in subsection (a), shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report that—

(1) describes the activities carried out under the Program during the 2 preceding years;

(2) assesses the management, coordination, implementation, and effectiveness of Program activities;

(3) suggests improvements for the coordination and engagement of the Program with States, Indian Tribes, units of local government, and at-risk communities;

(4) assesses trends and developments in science and engineering relating to wildfire risk reduction in the built environment, land-use planning, and vegetation management that could be used to improve the effectiveness or efficiency of the Program;

(5) provides recommendations, to the maximum extent practicable—

(A) to improve the Program, including the ability of the Program to provide financial or technical assistance to States, Indian Tribes, units of local government, and at-risk communities; and

(B) to modify existing requirements for Federal assistance or programs that support community wildfire risk reduction to improve the delivery, effectiveness, or availability of such assistance or programs;

(6) describes and itemizes the total amount of funding relating to community wildfire risk reduction that was obligated during the 2 preceding fiscal years by the agencies described in subsection (a); and

(7) describes any feedback incorporated from non-Federal stakeholders to improve the function and operation of the Program.

(f) SUNSET.—The Program terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5202. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE RESEARCH PROGRAM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries, acting jointly, shall expand the Joint Fire Science Program to include a performance-driven research and development program, to be known as the “Community Wildfire Defense Research Program” (referred to in this section as the “Program”), for the purpose of testing and advancing innovative designs to establish or improve the wildfire resistance of structures and communities.

(b) PROGRAM PRIORITIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretaries shall evaluate efforts and opportunities on or after the date of enactment of this Act to establish wildfire-resistant structures and communities through—

(1) different affordable building materials, including mass timber;

(2) home hardening, including policies to incentivize and incorporate defensible space;

(3) preparation for wildland fire smoke;

(4) subdivision design and other land-use planning and design;

(5) landscape architecture; and

(6) other wildfire-resistant designs, as determined by the Secretaries.

(c) COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE INNOVATION PRIZE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretaries shall carry out a competition through which a person may submit to the Secretaries innovative designs for the establishment or improvement of an ignition-resistant structure or fire-adapted community.

(2) PRIZE.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for that purpose, the Secretaries may award a prize under the competition described in paragraph (1), based on criteria established by the Secretaries and in accordance with paragraph (3).

(3) SCALE.—In awarding a prize under paragraph (2), the Secretaries shall prioritize for an award designs with the greatest potential to scale to existing infrastructure.

(d) COLLABORATION AND NONDUPLICATION.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretaries shall ensure collaboration and non duplication of activities with the Building Technologies Office of the Department of Energy.

(e) COORDINATION.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretaries shall coordinate with the Administrator of the United States Fire Administration.

(f) SUNSET.—The Program terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5203. COMMUNITY WILDFIRE DEFENSE GRANT PROGRAM IMPROVEMENTS.**

Section 40803(f) of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592(f)) is amended—

(1) by striking paragraph (1)(B), and inserting the following:

“(B) to carry out projects, including—

“(i) landscape and hazardous fuels reduction treatments;

“(ii) the retrofit, modification, or maintenance of a structure to improve resistance to fire;

“(iii) creating defensible space around structures to improve resistance to fire;

“(iv) hardening infrastructure, including evacuation routes, to improve resistance to fire;

“(v) any other project described in a community wildfire protection plan that is not more than 10 years old; and

“(vi) deployment of wildfire technologies determined to be successful under section 5303 of the Fix Our Forests Act.”;

(2) in paragraph (2)—

(A) in subparagraph (B), by striking “or” at the end;

(B) in subparagraph (C), by striking the period at the end and inserting “; or”;

and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) located in a fireshed management area (as defined in section 5002 of the Fix Our Forests Act).”;

and

(3) in paragraph (3)—

(A) in subparagraph (C)(i), by striking “continental”;

and

(B) by adding at the end the following:

“(D) LIMITATION ON ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Not more than 7 percent of funds obligated under this subsection may be used for administrative expenses incurred by the Secretary of Agriculture.”.

**SEC. 5204. UPDATED DEFINITION OF AT-RISK COMMUNITY.**

Section 101 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6511) is amended by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following:

“(1) AT-RISK COMMUNITY.—The term ‘at-risk community’ means an area that is composed of—

“(A) an interface community (as defined in the notice entitled ‘Wildland Urban Interface Communities Within the Vicinity of Federal Lands That Are at High Risk From Wildfire’ (66 Fed. Reg. 753 (January 4, 2001)) issued by the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with title IV of the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2001 (114 Stat. 1009));

“(B) a group of homes and other structures with basic infrastructure and services (such as utilities and collectively maintained transportation routes) at risk from wildfire, as recognized in a fireshed, State, Tribal, local, regional, territorial, or national wildfire risk assessment; or

“(C) a group of homes and other structures with basic infrastructure and services (such as utilities and collectively maintained transportation routes), as determined by the Secretary of Agriculture.”.

**Subtitle B—Vegetation Management, Reforestation, and Local Fire Risk Mitigation**

**SEC. 5211. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT, FACILITY INSPECTION, AND OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE RELATING TO ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION AND DISTRIBUTION FACILITY RIGHTS-OF-WAY.**

(a) HAZARD TREES WITHIN 150 FEET OF ELECTRIC POWER LINE.—Section 512(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(a)(1)(B)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “likely to—” and inserting “likely—”;

(2) in clause (i), by inserting “to” after the clause designation; and

(3) in clause (ii), by striking “come within 10” and inserting “to come within 150”.

(b) CONSULTATION WITH PRIVATE LANDOWNERS.—Section 512(c)(3)(E) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772(c)(3)(E)) is amended—

(1) in clause (i), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) in clause (ii), by striking the period and inserting “; and”;

and

(3) by adding at the end the following: “(iii) consulting with a private landowner with respect to any hazard trees identified for removal from land owned by the private landowner.”.

(c) REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS.—Section 512(c)(4)(A) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C.

1772(c)(4)(A)) is amended by striking clause (iv) and inserting the following:

“(iv) ensures that—

“(I) a plan submitted without a modification under clause (iii) shall be automatically approved by the date that is 120 days after the date of submission; and

“(II) for a plan submitted with a modification under clause (iii), if the plan is not approved by the date that is 120 days after the date of submission, the Secretary concerned shall develop and submit to the owner and operator a letter describing—

“(aa) a detailed timeline (to conclude by the date that is 165 days after the date of submission of the plan) for completing review of the plan;

“(bb) any identified deficiencies in the plan and specific opportunities for the owner or operator to address each deficiency; and

“(cc) any other relevant information, as determined by the Secretary concerned.”.

(d) TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS.—Section 512 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772) is amended—

(1) in the section heading, by striking “MANAGEMENT” and inserting “MANAGEMENT”; and

(2) in subsection (c)(4)(A)(ii), by striking “and” at the end.

(e) VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report describing, with respect to vegetation management plans submitted under section 512 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772)—

(1) the extent to which those vegetation management plans under are reviewed and approved within the 120-day period required under subsection (c)(4)(A)(iv) of that section;

(2) for any vegetation management plan not reviewed and approved by the applicable deadline described in paragraph (1), the reason for any delay in review or approval; and

(3) for any vegetation management plan submitted for review and approval for which the Secretary concerned requested a modification, the timeline for reviewing the modification on resubmission.

**SEC. 5212. FIRE-SAFE ELECTRICAL CORRIDORS.**

Section 512 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1772) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (j) and (k) as subsections (k) and (l), respectively; and

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

“(j) PERMITS AND AGREEMENTS WITH OWNERS AND OPERATORS OF ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION OR DISTRIBUTION FACILITIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In any special use permit or easement on National Forest System land or land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management provided to the owner or operator of an electric transmission or distribution facility, the Secretary concerned may provide permission to cut and remove trees or other vegetation from within striking distance of the electric transmission or distribution facility without requiring a separate timber sale, if that cutting and removal is consistent with—

“(A) the applicable plan;

“(B) the applicable land and resource management plan or land use plan; and

“(C) other applicable environmental laws (including regulations).

“(2) USE OF PROCEEDS.—A special use permit or easement that includes permission for cutting and removal described in paragraph (1) shall include a requirement that, if the owner or operator of the electric transmission or distribution facility sells any portion of the material removed under the permit or easement, the owner or operator shall

provide to the Secretary concerned any proceeds received from the sale, less any costs incurred in 1 or both of the following activities:

“(A) Carrying out the project.

“(B) Maintenance within the vicinity of the electric transmission or distribution facility that reduces fire risk.

“(3) EFFECT.—Nothing in paragraph (2) shall require the sale of any material removed under a permit or easement that includes permission for cutting and removal described in paragraph (1).”

**SEC. 5213. CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION FOR HIGH-PRIORITY HAZARD TREES.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) HIGH-PRIORITY HAZARD TREE.—The term “high-priority hazard tree” means a standing tree that—

(A) presents a visible hazard to people or property due to conditions such as deterioration of, or damage to, the root system, trunk, stem, or limbs of the tree, or the direction or lean of the tree, as determined by the Secretary;

(B) is determined by the Secretary to be highly likely to fail and, on failure, would be highly likely to cause injury to people or damage to Federal property; and

(C) is located—

(i) within 300 feet of a National Forest System road with a maintenance level of 3, 4, or 5;

(ii) along a National Forest System trail; or

(iii) in a developed recreation site on National Forest System land that is operated and maintained by the Secretary.

(2) HIGH-PRIORITY HAZARD TREE ACTIVITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “high-priority hazard tree activity” means a forest management activity that mitigates the risks associated with high-priority hazard trees, including pruning, felling, and disposal of a high-priority hazard tree.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term “high-priority hazard tree activity” does not include any activity—

(i) conducted in a wilderness area or wilderness study area;

(ii) for the construction of a permanent road or permanent trail;

(iii) conducted on Federal land on which, by Act of Congress or Presidential proclamation, the removal of vegetation is restricted or prohibited;

(iv) conducted in an area in which activities described in subparagraph (A) would be inconsistent with the applicable land and resource management plan; or

(v) conducted in an inventoried roadless area.

(b) CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall develop a categorical exclusion (as defined in 111 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4336e)) for high-priority hazard tree activities.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—In developing and administering the categorical exclusion under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

(A) comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

(B) apply the extraordinary circumstances procedures under section 220.6 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations), in determining whether to use the categorical exclusion.

(3) PROJECT SIZE LIMITATION.—A project carried out using the categorical exclusion developed under paragraph (1) may not exceed 6,000 acres.

**SEC. 5214. SEEDS OF SUCCESS STRATEGY.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the

Secretaries shall jointly develop and implement a strategy, which may be an update to or expansion of existing efforts, to be known as the “Seeds of Success strategy”, to enhance the domestic supply chain of seeds, which may include herbaceous and tree seeds.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy developed under subsection (a) shall include a plan for each of the following:

(1) Facilitating sustained interagency coordination in, and a comprehensive approach to, native plant materials development and restoration.

(2) Promoting the re-seeding of native or fire-resistant vegetation post-wildfire, particularly in the wildland-urban interface.

(3) Creating and consolidating information relating to native or fire-resistant vegetation and sharing that information with Indian Tribes and State and local governments.

(4) Building regional programs and partnerships to promote the development of materials made from plants native to the United States and restore those plants to their respective, native habitats within the United States, giving priority to the building of those programs and partnerships in regions of the Bureau of Land Management where the partnerships and programs do not exist on the date of enactment of this Act.

(5) Expanding workforce and infrastructure capacity to locally collect, process, and store seed as necessary to implement revegetation and reforestation projects on priority land (as defined in section 5215(b)(1)).

(6) Expanding warehouse systems of the Secretaries, particularly the cold storage capacity of the systems.

(7) Shortening the timeline for the approval of permits to collect seeds on public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

(8) Coordinating with the other Federal agencies, States, Indian Tribes, and private entities, as appropriate, for the purpose of seed collection.

(c) REPORT.—The Secretaries shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress the strategy developed under subsection (a).

(d) COORDINATION.—In implementing the strategy developed under subsection (a), the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management, shall coordinate with the heads of other applicable Federal agencies, including the Department of Defense, for the purpose of collecting seeds from land under the jurisdiction under those Federal agencies.

**SEC. 5215. PROGRAM TO SUPPORT PRIORITY REFORESTATION AND RESTORATION PROJECTS.**

(a) REFORESTATION REPORTS SUBMITTED TO ADDITIONAL COMMITTEES.—Section 70303 of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 1601 note; Public Law 117-58) is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking inserting “, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives,” after “Senate”.

(b) INTERIOR REFORESTATION PROGRAM.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) COVERED INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term “covered institution of higher education” means a land-grant college or university, including—

(i) an 1862 Institution (as defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601);

(ii) an 1890 Institution (as defined in that section);

(iii) an institution that is eligible to receive funding under Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the “McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962”); and

(iv) a 1994 Institution (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382)).

(B) NATURAL REGENERATION; REFORESTATION; UNPLANNED EVENT.—The terms “natural regeneration”, “reforestation”, and “unplanned event” have the meanings given those terms in section 3(e)(4)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1601(e)(4)(A)).

(C) PRIORITY LAND.—The term “priority land” means historically forested land under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned that, due to an unplanned event—

(i) requires reforestation to meet the objectives described in an applicable land use plan; and

(ii) is unlikely to experience natural regeneration.

(2) PROGRAM ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall establish a program to implement reforestation projects on priority land identified under paragraph (4)(A), in accordance with this section.

(3) SUPPORT.—In carrying out the program established under paragraph (2), the Secretary of the Interior may enter into—

(A) cooperative agreements in accordance with processes established by the Secretary of the Interior; and

(B) contracts, including contracts entered into pursuant to the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.).

(4) ANNUAL IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITY PROJECTS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary of the Interior shall—

(A) identify priority land within the United States;

(B) establish a list of reforestation projects on priority land for the upcoming year, which may include activities to ensure adequate and appropriate seed and seedling availability to further the objectives of other priority projects; and

(C) estimate the costs necessary to implement the list established under subparagraph (B).

(5) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the program under this subsection, the Secretary of the Interior shall consult or coordinate with, as appropriate—

(A) applicable State and local governments;

(B) applicable Indian Tribes;

(C) covered institutions of higher education;

(D) Federal agencies that administer Federal land that adjoins, or is adjacent to, land that is the subject of a project identified under paragraph (4)(B); and

(E) other stakeholders, at the discretion of the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) ANNUAL REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for each of the following 6 years, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress, the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report that includes the following, with respect to the period covered by the report:

(A) An accounting of all priority land.

(B) A list of projects identified under paragraph (4)(B).

(C) An accounting of any progress made on projects identified in any previous report under this paragraph.

(D) An accounting of each contract and cooperative agreement established under the program under this subsection.

(E) The amounts necessary to be appropriated, in addition to amounts available from other sources, to implement reforestation projects on all priority land by not later than 10 years after the date of submission of the report.

(7) FUNDING SOURCE REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress, the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives a report that describes options for dedicated Federal funding other than annual appropriations to support existing and anticipated reforestation needs, including seed and seedling availability.

(8) NONDUPLICATION.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary of the Interior shall collaborate with the Secretary and the Secretary of Defense to ensure the nonduplication of activities carried out under section 214.

**SEC. 5216. REFORESTATION, NURSERIES, AND GENETIC RESOURCES SUPPORT.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term “eligible recipient” means—

(A) a State forestry agency;

(B) an Indian Tribe; and

(C) a private nursery or seed orchard that has experience, as determined by the Secretary, in growing high-quality native trees or seeds of appropriate genetic sources in bareroot or container stocktypes specific for reforestation, restoration, or conservation, including native plants and seeds that are of cultural significance to Indian Tribes.

(2) NURSERY.—The term “nursery” means a tree or native plant nursery.

(3) SEED ORCHARD.—The term “seed orchard” means a tree or native plant seed orchard.

(b) PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION, AND OTHER ASSISTANCE IN SUPPORT OF NURSERIES AND SEED ORCHARDS.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

(1) partner with Federal and State agencies, Indian Tribes, institutions of higher education, nonprofit organizations, and private nurseries to provide training, technical assistance, and research to nursery and tree establishment programs that support natural regeneration, reforestation, agroforestry, and afforestation;

(2) promote information-sharing to improve technical knowledge and practices and understand reforestation needs and demands for seed or seedlings, climate change impacts, tree genetics for resistance to pathogens and drought, and other issues as necessary to address all facets of the reforestation supply chain;

(3) provide technical and financial assistance to international nursery and tree establishment programs through the Forest Service International Programs, the Institute of Pacific Islands Forestry, and the International Institute of Tropical Forestry;

(4) collaborate with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, including the Foreign Agricultural Service, the United States Agency for International Development, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and international organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to provide technical and financial assistance relating to nurseries and reforestation;

(5) coordinate the efforts of the Department of Agriculture—

(A) to address the challenges associated with the reforestation supply chain, including workforce development; and

(B) to leverage economic development assistance for work with private nurseries;

(6) expand reforestation supply chains through science and research, seed collection and storage, workforce development, and nursery infrastructure and operations; and

(7) shorten the timeline for the approval of permits to collect seeds on National Forest System land.

(c) NURSERY AND SEED ORCHARD GRANTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish or expand an existing program to provide grants to eligible recipients to support nurseries and seed orchards.

(2) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—An eligible recipient that receives a grant under paragraph (1) shall carry out a project that comprises 1 or more of the following activities:

(A) The development, expansion, enhancement, or improvement of nursery production capacity or other infrastructure—

(i) to improve seed collection and storage;

(ii) to increase seedling production, storage, and distribution; or

(iii) to enhance seedling survival and properly manage tree genetic resources.

(B) The establishment or expansion of a nursery or seed orchard, including by acquiring equipment for a nursery or seed orchard.

(C) The development or implementation of quality control measures at nurseries or seed orchards.

(D) The promotion of workforce development within any facet of the reforestation supply chain.

(E) Such other activities as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

**SEC. 5217. FIRE DEPARTMENT REPAYMENT.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT OF STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall—

(1) establish standard operating procedures relating to payment timelines for fire suppression cost-share agreements established under section 2 of the Act of May 27, 1955 (42 U.S.C. 1856a) (commonly known as the “Reciprocal Fire Protection Act”); and

(2) with respect to each fire suppression cost-share agreement in operation on that date—

(A) review the agreement; and

(B) modify the agreement as necessary to comply with the standard operating procedures established under paragraph (1).

(b) ALIGNMENT OF AGREEMENTS.—The standard operating procedures under subsection (a)(1) shall include a requirement that each fire suppression cost-share agreement shall be aligned with each cooperative fire protection agreement applicable to the entity subject to the fire suppression cost-share agreement.

(c) PAYMENTS.—With respect to payments made pursuant to a fire suppression cost-share agreement, the standard operating procedures under subsection (a)(1) shall require that the paying entity shall reimburse a local fire department or a State wildland firefighter agency if that entity submits to the paying entity an invoice in accordance with applicable cost settlement procedures.

(d) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretaries should carry out reciprocal fire suppression cost-share agreement repayments to local fire suppression organizations and State wildland firefighting agencies as soon as practicable, but not later than 1 year, after the date on which the applicable fire suppression occurs.

**TITLE III—TRANSPARENCY, TECHNOLOGY, AND PARTNERSHIPS**

**Subtitle A—Transparency and Technology**  
**SEC. 5301. BIOCHAR INNOVATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSERVATION, HEALTH, AND ADVANCEMENTS IN RESEARCH.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) BIOCHAR.—The term “biochar” means carbonized biomass produced by converting feedstock through reductive thermal processing for a nonfuel use.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible entity” means—

(A) a unit of State or local government or Indian Tribe;

(B) a special district;

(C) an eligible institution;

(D) a public, private, or cooperative entity or organization;

(E) a National Laboratory (as defined in section 2 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (42 U.S.C. 15801)); and

(F) a partnership or consortium of 2 or more entities described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligible institution” means a land-grant college or university, including—

(A) an 1862 Institution (as defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601));

(B) a 1890 Institution (as defined in that section);

(C) an institution that is eligible to receive funding under Public Law 87-788 (commonly known as the “McIntire-Stennis Act of 1962”); and

(D) a 1994 Institution (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382)).

(4) FEEDSTOCK.—The term “feedstock” means excess biomass in the form of plant matter or materials that serves as the raw material for the production of biochar.

(5) SECRETARIES.—The term “Secretaries” means—

(A) the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service;

(B) the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Director of the Bureau of Land Management; and

(C) the Secretary of Energy, acting through the Director of the Office of Science.

(b) DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for that purpose, not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall establish a program under which the Secretaries shall enter into partnerships with eligible entities to carry out demonstration projects to support the development and commercialization of biochar in accordance with this subsection.

(B) LOCATION.—In carrying out the program established under subparagraph (A), the Secretaries shall, to the maximum extent practicable, enter into partnerships with eligible entities in a manner that ensures that—

(i) at least 1 demonstration project is carried out in each region of the Forest Service; and

(ii) at least 1 demonstration project is carried out in each region of the Bureau of Land Management.

(2) PROPOSALS.—To be eligible to enter into a partnership under paragraph (1)(A), an eligible entity shall submit to the Secretaries a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretaries may require.

(3) PRIORITY.—In selecting proposals under paragraph (2), the Secretaries shall give priority to entering into partnerships with eligible entities that submit proposals to carry out biochar demonstration projects that—

(A) have the most potential to improve forest health and resiliency;

(B) have the most potential to create new jobs and contribute to local economies, particularly in rural areas;

(C) have the most potential to demonstrate—

- (i) new and innovative uses of biochar;
  - (ii) market viability for cost-effective biochar-based products;
  - (iii) the restorative benefits of biochar with respect to forest health and resiliency, including forest soils and watersheds; or
  - (iv) any combination of the purposes described in clauses (i) through (iii);
- (D) are located in areas that have a high need for biochar production, as determined by the Secretaries, due to—
- (i) nearby land identified as having high, very high, or extreme risk of wildfire;
  - (ii) availability of sufficient quantities of feedstocks; or
  - (iii) a high level of demand for biochar or other commercial byproducts of biochar; or
- (E) satisfy any combination of the purposes described in subparagraphs (A) through (D).

(4) USE OF FUNDS.—In carrying out the program established under paragraph (1)(A), the Secretaries may enter into partnerships and provide funding to the partnerships to carry out demonstration projects—

(A) to acquire and test various feedstocks and the efficacy of those feedstocks;

(B) to develop and optimize commercially and technologically viable biochar production units, including mobile and permanent units;

(C) to demonstrate—

- (i) the production of biochar from forest residue; and
- (ii) the use of biochar to restore forest health and resiliency;

(D) to build, expand, or establish biochar facilities;

(E) to conduct research relating to new and innovative uses of biochar;

(F) to demonstrate cost-effective market opportunities for biochar and biochar-based products;

(G) to carry out any other activities the Secretaries determine to be appropriate; or

(H) to achieve any combination of the purposes described in subparagraphs (A) through (G).

(5) FEEDSTOCK REQUIREMENTS.—To the maximum extent practicable, an eligible entity that carries out a biochar demonstration project under this subsection shall derive not less than 50 percent of the feedstock used under the project from forest thinning and management activities, including mill residues, conducted on National Forest System land or public land.

(6) REVIEW.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall conduct regionally specific research, including economic analyses and lifecycle assessments, relating to any biochar produced from a demonstration project carried out under the program established under paragraph (1)(A), including—

- (i) the effects of that biochar on—
  - (I) forest health and resiliency;
  - (II) carbon sequestration, including increasing soil carbon in the short-term and long-term;
  - (III) productivity, reduced input costs, and water retention in agricultural practices;
  - (IV) the health of soil and grasslands used for grazing activities, including grazing activities on National Forest System land and public land; and
- (V) environmental remediation activities, including abandoned mine land remediation;

(ii) the effectiveness of biochar as a coproduct of biofuels or in biochemicals; and

(iii) the effectiveness of other potential uses of biochar to determine if any such use is technologically and commercially viable.

(B) COORDINATION.—The Secretaries, to the maximum extent practicable, shall provide data, analyses, and other relevant informa-

tion collected under subparagraph (A) to recipients of grants under subsection (c).

(7) LIMITATION ON FUNDING FOR ESTABLISHING BIOCHAR FACILITIES.—The amount provided by the Secretaries under this subsection to an eligible entity for establishing a biochar facility may not exceed 35 percent of the total capital cost of establishing that facility.

(c) BIOCHAR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary of the Interior, in consultation with the Secretary of Energy, shall establish, or expand an existing, applied biochar research and development grant program to provide to eligible institutions grants, on a competitive basis, to carry out the activities described in paragraph (3).

(2) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to receive a grant under this subsection, an eligible institution shall submit to the Secretary of the Interior a proposal at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary of the Interior may require.

(3) USE OF FUNDS.—An eligible institution that receives a grant under this subsection shall use the grant funds to conduct applied research relating to—

(A) the effect of biochar on forest health and resiliency, taking into account variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(B) the effect of biochar on soil health, water retention, and air quality emissions, taking into account variations in biochar, soil, climate, and other factors;

(C) the long-term carbon sequestration potential of biochar;

(D) best management practices with respect to biochar and biochar-based products that maximize—

- (i) carbon sequestration benefits; and
- (ii) the commercial viability and application of those products in forestry, agriculture, environmental remediation, water quality improvement, and any other similar uses, as determined by the Secretary of the Interior;

(E) the regional uses of biochar to increase productivity and profitability, including—

(i) uses in agriculture and environmental remediation; and

(ii) use as a coproduct in fuel production;

(F) new and innovative uses for biochar by-products; and

(G) opportunities to expand markets for biochar and create related jobs, particularly in rural areas.

(d) REPORTS.—

(1) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries shall submit to Congress a report that—

(A) includes policy and program recommendations to improve the widespread use of biochar;

(B) identifies any area of research needed to advance biochar commercialization; and

(C) identifies barriers to advancing biochar commercialization, including permitting and siting considerations.

(2) MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT'S BUDGET.—Beginning with the second fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter until the date described in subsection (e), the Secretaries shall include in the materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's budget pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, a report describing, for the fiscal year covered by the report, the status of—

(A) each demonstration project carried out under subsection (b); and

(B) each research and development grant provided under subsection (c).

(e) SUNSET.—The authority to carry out this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 5302. ACCURATE HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION REPORTS.

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) FEDERAL LAND.—The term “Federal land” means any land under the jurisdiction of—

(A) the Secretary; or

(B) the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) HAZARDOUS FUELS REDUCTION ACTIVITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “hazardous fuels reduction activity” means any vegetation management activity to reduce the risk of wildfire, including mechanical treatments, grazing, and prescribed burning.

(B) EXCLUSION.—The term “hazardous fuels reduction activity” does not include the awarding of a contract to conduct an activity described in subparagraph (A).

(b) MATERIALS SUBMITTED IN SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT'S BUDGET.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Beginning with the first fiscal year that begins after the date of enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the Secretary concerned shall include in the materials submitted to Congress in support of the President's budget pursuant to section 1105 of title 31, United States Code, a report describing the number of acres of Federal land on which the Secretary concerned carried out hazardous fuels reduction activities during the preceding fiscal year, as determined using—

(A) the methodology of the Secretary concerned in effect on the day before the date of enactment of this Act; and

(B) the methodology described in paragraph (2).

(2) REQUIREMENTS.—For purposes of a report required under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall—

(A) in determining the number of acres of Federal land on which the Secretary concerned carried out hazardous fuels reduction activities during the period covered by the report—

(i) record acres of Federal land on which hazardous fuels reduction activities were completed during that period; and

(ii) record each acre described in clause (i) once in the report, regardless of whether multiple hazardous fuels reduction activities were carried out on that acre during the applicable period; and

(B) with respect to the acres of Federal land recorded in the report, include information relating to—

(i) which acres are located in the wildland-urban interface;

(ii) the level of hazard potential of the acres on the first and last day of the period covered by the report;

(iii) the types of hazardous fuels reduction activities completed with respect to the acres, including a description of whether those hazardous fuels reduction activities were conducted—

(I) in a wildfire managed for resource benefits; or

(II) through a planned hazardous fuels reduction project;

(iv) the cost per-acre of the hazardous fuels reduction activities carried out during the period covered by the report;

(v) the region or System unit in which the acres are located; and

(vi) the effectiveness of the hazardous fuels reduction activities with respect to reducing the risk of wildfire.

(3) TRANSPARENCY.—The Secretary concerned shall make each report submitted under paragraph (1) publicly available on the website of the Department of Agriculture or

the Department of the Interior, as applicable.

(c) ACCURATE DATA COLLECTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned shall implement standardized procedures for tracking data relating to hazardous fuels reduction activities carried out by the Secretary concerned.

(2) ELEMENTS.—The standardized procedures required under paragraph (1) shall include—

(A) regular, standardized data reviews of the accuracy and timely input of data used to track hazardous fuels reduction activities;

(B) verification methods that validate whether those data accurately correlate to the hazardous fuels reduction activities carried out by the Secretary concerned;

(C) an analysis of the short- and long-term effectiveness of the hazardous fuels reduction activities on reducing the risk of wildfire; and

(D) for hazardous fuels reduction activities that occur partially within the wildland-urban interface, methods to distinguish which acres are located within the wildland-urban interface and which acres are located outside the wildland-urban interface.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 45 days after implementing the standardized procedures required under paragraph (1), the Secretary concerned shall submit to Congress a report that describes—

(A) the standardized procedures; and

(B) any programmatic or policy recommendations to Congress to address limitations in tracking data relating to hazardous fuels reduction activities under this subsection.

(d) GAO STUDY.—Not later than 2 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study regarding the implementation of this section, including any limitations with respect to—

(A) reporting hazardous fuels reduction activities under subsection (b); or

(B) tracking data relating to hazardous fuels reduction activities under subsection (c); and

(2) submit to Congress a report that describes the results of the study under paragraph (1).

(e) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No additional funds are authorized to carry out this section.

(2) SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATIONS.—The activities authorized by this section are subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for those purposes.

**SEC. 5303. PUBLIC-PRIVATE WILDFIRE TECHNOLOGY DEPLOYMENT AND DEMONSTRATION PARTNERSHIP.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED AGENCY.—The term “covered agency” means—

(A) each Federal land management agency (as defined in section 802 of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801));

(B) the Department of Defense;

(C) the Bureau of Indian Affairs;

(D) the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration;

(E) the Federal Emergency Management Agency;

(F) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration;

(G) the United States Fire Administration;

(H) the General Services Administration;

(I) a State, Tribal, county, or municipal fire department, fire district, land management agency, natural resources agency, or equivalent agency operating through the United States Fire Administration or pursu-

ant to an agreement with a Federal agency; and

(J) any other Federal agency involved in wildfire response.

(2) COVERED ENTITY.—The term “covered entity” means—

(A) a private entity;

(B) a nonprofit organization; and

(C) an institution of higher education (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)).

(3) PILOT PROGRAM.—The term “Pilot Program” means the deployment and demonstration pilot program established under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Executive Director shall establish a deployment and demonstration pilot program for new and innovative wildfire prevention, detection, communication, response, and mitigation technologies.

(c) FUNCTIONS.—In carrying out the Pilot Program, the Executive Director shall—

(1) consult with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group;

(2) in consultation with the heads of the covered agencies, identify and advance the demonstration and deployment of key technology priority areas, including for mature and commercially available technologies, with respect to the deployment of wildfire prevention, detection, communication, and mitigation technologies, including—

(A) innovations in hazardous fuels reduction activities or treatments, including the use of prescribed or cultural fire;

(B) spatial planning for unplanned human-caused ignitions;

(C) wildfire modeling and effectiveness algorithms;

(D) dispatch communications;

(E) remote sensing, detection, and tracking;

(F) safety equipment;

(G) common operating pictures or operational dashboards;

(H) interoperable commercial data;

(I) autonomous suppression systems;

(J) grid resilience;

(K) community resilience and home hardening; and

(L) prioritization and decision support tools;

(3) connect each covered entity selected to participate in the Pilot Program with the appropriate covered agency to coordinate real-time and on-the-ground testing of technology during wildfire mitigation activities and training;

(4) define clear criteria for evaluating the success of technologies (including mature and commercially available technologies) demonstrated under the Pilot Program, focusing on effectiveness, scalability, and cost-efficiency; and

(5) coordinate with covered agencies to ensure the efficient deployment of scaled technologies, including through expanded public-private partnerships, multiagency contracting for procurement, and authorization of covered agency staff with technological procurement expertise to assist other covered agencies in need of that expertise.

(d) APPLICATIONS.—To be eligible to participate in the Pilot Program, a covered entity shall submit to the Executive Director an application at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Executive Director may require, including a proposal to demonstrate technologies specific to key technology priority areas identified under subsection (c)(2).

(e) EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A covered agency may submit a statement to the Executive Director describing the effectiveness, scalability, and cost-efficiency of an existing partner-

ship, pilot project, or contract a covered entity providing a technology described in subsection (c)(2).

(2) SUCCESSFULNESS.—The Executive Director may deem a technology described in a statement submitted under paragraph (1) to be a successful technology for purposes of this section.

(f) OUTREACH.—The Executive Director, in coordination with the heads of the covered agencies, shall make publicly available the key technology priority areas identified under subsection (c)(2) and invite covered entities to apply under subsection (d) to deploy and demonstrate technologies to address those priority areas.

(g) REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of establishment of the Pilot Program, and annually thereafter for the duration of the Pilot Program, the Executive Director shall submit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology of the House of Representatives, and the relevant committees of Congress a report that includes the following with respect to the Pilot Program:

(1) A brief description of potential technologies deployed and demonstrated.

(2) An estimate of the cost of acquiring each such technology and applying the technology at scale.

(3) Outreach efforts by covered agencies to covered entities developing wildfire technologies.

(4) Assessments of, and recommendations relating to, new technologies with potential adoption and application at-scale in the wildfire prevention, detection, communication, and mitigation efforts of Federal land management agencies (as defined in section 802 of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (16 U.S.C. 6801)).

(5) A description of the relationship and coordination between the Pilot Program and the activities of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, including the Fire Weather Testbed.

(6) Barriers and solutions for procurement of technologies by covered agencies.

(h) SUNSET.—The Pilot Program terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5304. GAO STUDY ON FOREST SERVICE POLICIES.**

Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall—

(1) conduct a study evaluating—

(A) the effectiveness of Forest Service wildland firefighting operations;

(B) transparency and accountability measures in the budget and accounting process of the Forest Service; and

(C) the suitability and feasibility of establishing a new Federal agency with responsibility for responding to, and suppressing, wildfires on Federal land; and

(2) submit to Congress a report that describes the results of the study under paragraph (1).

**SEC. 5305. KEEPING FOREST PLANS CURRENT AND MONITORED.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall—

(1) to the maximum extent practicable and subject to the availability of appropriations—

(A) ensure that each forest plan for a unit of the National Forest System is in compliance with the applicable requirements of section 6(f)(5)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(f)(5)(A)); and

(B) prioritize revising any forest plan not in compliance with that section;

(2) not be considered to be in violation of section 6(f)(5)(A) of the Forest and Rangeland Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. 1604(f)(5)(A)) solely because more than 15 years have passed without revision of the plan for a unit of the National Forest System;

(3) not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act, submit to the relevant committees of Congress a notice describing the date on which each forest plan referred to in paragraph (1)(A) was most recently revised, amended, or otherwise modified;

(4) seek to publish a new, complete version of any forest plan that the Secretary has been directed by court order to amend, revise, or modify by not later than 60 days after the date of the amendment, revision, or modification, subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for that purpose; and

(5) maintain a central, publicly accessible website with links to—

(A) the most recently available forest plan adopted, amended, or modified by a court order as a single document; and

(B) the most recently published forest plan monitoring report for the administrative unit.

(b) **GOOD FAITH UPDATES.**—If the Secretary fails to act expeditiously and in good faith using available funding to revise, amend, or modify a plan for a unit of the National Forest System as required by an applicable law or court order—

(1) subsection (a) shall be void with respect to the plan; and

(2) a court of competent jurisdiction may order completion of the plan on an accelerated basis.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report summarizing the implementation of this section.

(d) **SUNSET.**—The authority under this section terminates on September 30, 2031.

#### **SEC. 5306. CONTAINER AERIAL FIREFIGHTING SYSTEM.**

(a) **EVALUATION.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in consultation with the National Interagency Aviation Committee and the Interagency Airtanker Board, shall jointly conduct an evaluation of the container aerial firefighting system to assess the use of that system to mitigate and suppress wildfires.

(b) **REPORT.**—Not later than 30 days after the date of completion of the evaluation under subsection (a), the Secretaries, in consultation with the National Interagency Aviation Committee and the Interagency Airtanker Board, shall jointly submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report that describes the results of the evaluation under subsection (a).

#### **SEC. 5307. STUDY ON PINE BEETLE INFESTATION.**

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

(1) carry out a study relating to the causes and effects of, and solutions for, the infestation of pine beetles in the Northeastern region of the United States; and

(2) submit to the relevant committees of Congress a report that describes the results of the study under paragraph (1).

#### **SEC. 5308. STUDY ON WILDFIRE SMOKE.**

Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries, in coordination with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, shall conduct and publish a study—

(1) reviewing the 2 most recent international arrangements between the Secre-

taries and the Department of Natural Resources of Canada concerning the exchange of wildland fire management resources;

(2) describing the wildland fire management resources exchanged under the international arrangements described in paragraph (1);

(3) evaluating the effectiveness of the international arrangements described in paragraph (1) in reducing wildfire smoke in the United States; and

(4) making recommendations on best practices to be used in international arrangements to reduce international wildfire smoke.

#### **SEC. 5309. ROOT AND STEM PROJECTS.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **COLLABORATIVE PROCESS.**—The term “collaborative process” means a process that—

(A) includes multiple interested persons representing diverse interests; and

(B)(i) is transparent and nonexclusive; or

(ii) meets the requirements for a resource advisory committee under subsections (c) through (f) of section 205 of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000 (16 U.S.C. 7125).

(2) **FEDERAL LAND.**—The term “Federal land” means National Forest System land and public land.

(3) **ROOT AND STEM PROJECT.**—The term “root and stem project” means a project, from planning phase to implementation, that—

(A) is developed through a collaborative process with a lead project sponsor that will implement the project; and

(B)(i) is located on Federal land; and

(ii) advances 1 or more land management goals established for the Federal land.

(b) **CONTRACTS AND AGREEMENTS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If a project sponsor submits to the Secretary concerned a proposal to carry out a root and stem project on Federal land managed by the Secretary concerned, the Secretary concerned may enter into a contract or agreement under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) with the project sponsor, under which the project sponsor shall—

(A) complete any analysis that the Secretary concerned determines to be necessary under Federal law, including the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.) and the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), for the root and stem project; and

(B) implement the root and stem project.

(2) **CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**—Section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) (as amended by section 5112) is amended—

(A) in subsection (b)—

(i) by striking the period at the end and inserting “; and”;

(ii) by striking “entities to perform” and inserting the following: “entities—

“(1) to perform”; and

(iii) by adding at the end the following:

“(2) to complete any analysis required under Federal law, including—

“(A) the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

“(B) the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.).”;

(B) in subsection (c), in the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “subsection (b)” and inserting “subsection (b)(1)”; and

(C) in subsection (d)(4)(A), by striking “services received under the” and inserting “any analysis required under Federal law or services received under an”.

(c) **SAVINGS CLAUSES.**—

(1) **AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY CONCERNED.**—The Secretary concerned shall—

(A) determine the sufficiency of any documents prepared relating to an analysis under subsection (b)(1); and

(B) retain responsibility for any authorizing decision relating to a root and stem project proposed under subsection (b).

(2) **LIMITATIONS ON REIMBURSEMENTS.**—If insufficient receipts are generated by a root and stem project to reimburse the project sponsor for the full cost of an analysis under subsection (b)(1), the Secretary concerned shall not provide funding in an amount that exceeds the receipts generated to the project sponsor.

(d) **PROMOTION.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary concerned shall provide to each local field office of the Secretary concerned guidance for—

(1) making stakeholders aware of the authority under this section; and

(2) encouraging use of that authority to meet land management goals.

(e) **PARTICIPATION IN CIVIL ACTIONS.**—For purposes of a civil action relating to a root and stem project, the project sponsor or the State, local, or Tribal government that participated in the collaborative process to develop the proposal for the root and stem project shall be entitled to intervene as a matter of right in that civil action.

#### **Subtitle B—White Oak Resilience**

#### **SEC. 5311. WHITE OAK RESTORATION INITIATIVE COALITION.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established a coalition, to be known as the “White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition” (referred to in this section as the “Coalition”)—

(1) as a voluntary collaborative group of Federal, State, and local governments, Indian Tribes, and private and nongovernmental organizations the purpose of which is to carry out the duties described in subsection (b); and

(2) in accordance with the charter entitled “White Oak Initiative Coalition Charter” adopted by the White Oak Initiative Board of Directors on March 21, 2023 (or a successor charter).

(b) **DUTIES.**—In addition to the duties specified in the charter referred to in subsection (a)(2), the duties of the Coalition are—

(1) to coordinate Federal, State, Tribal, local, private, and nongovernmental activities for the restoration of white oak trees and forests that support white oak trees in the United States; and

(2) to make program and policy recommendations, consistent with applicable forest management plans, with respect to—

(A) changes necessary to address Federal and State policies that impede activities to improve the health, resiliency, and natural regeneration of white oak trees;

(B) adopting or modifying Federal and State policies to increase the pace and scale of white oak regeneration and the resiliency of white oak trees;

(C) options to enhance communication, coordination, and collaboration among forest land owners, particularly with respect to cross-boundary projects, to improve the health, resiliency, and natural regeneration of white oak trees;

(D) research gaps that should be addressed to improve the best available science on white oaks;

(E) outreach to forest landowners the land of which possesses white oak trees or white oak regeneration potential, as determined by the Coalition; and

(F) options and policies necessary to improve the quality and quantity of white oak trees in tree nurseries.

(c) **ADMINISTRATIVE, STAFFING, AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT.**—The Secretaries shall make available to the Coalition such personnel for

administrative support, technical services, and the development and dissemination of educational materials as those Secretaries determine to be necessary to carry out this section.

(d) PRIVATE FUNDING.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for that purpose, the Secretary may make funds available to the Coalition to carry out this section from the account established pursuant to section 1241(f) of the Food Security Act of 1985 (16 U.S.C. 3841(f)).

**SEC. 5312. FOREST SERVICE PILOT PROGRAM.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall establish and carry out 5 pilot projects in units of the National Forest System to restore white oak trees in those units through white oak restoration and natural regeneration practices that are consistent with applicable forest management plans.

(b) REQUIREMENT.—Of the pilot projects carried out under subsection (a), not fewer than 3 shall be carried out on units of the National Forest System that are reserved or withdrawn from the public domain.

(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary may enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the pilot projects under this section.

(d) SUNSET.—The authority under this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5313. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR WHITE OAK REVIEW AND RESTORATION.**

(a) ASSESSMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of the Interior shall carry out an assessment of land under the administrative jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior, including fish and wildlife refuges and abandoned mine land, to evaluate—

(A) whether white oak trees are present on the land; and

(B) the potential to restore white oak forests on the land.

(2) USE OF INFORMATION.—In carrying out the assessment under paragraph (1), the Secretary of the Interior may use information from sources other than the Department of the Interior, including the White Oak Initiative and the Forest Service.

(3) REPORT.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall submit to Congress, and make publicly available on the website of the Department of the Interior, a report describing the results of the assessment carried out under this subsection.

(b) PILOT PROJECTS.—After the date of submission of the report under subsection (a)(3), the Secretary of the Interior shall establish and carry out 5 pilot projects in different areas of land described in subsection (a)(1) to restore and naturally regenerate white oak trees.

(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary of the Interior may enter into cooperative agreements to carry out the pilot projects under subsection (b).

(d) SUNSET.—The authority under this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5314. WHITE OAK REGENERATION AND UPLAND OAK HABITAT.**

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a nonregulatory program, to be known as the “White Oak and Upland Oak Habitat Regeneration Program” (referred to in this section as the “Program”).

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Program shall include—

(1) coordinating restoration and conservation activities among Federal, State, and

local entities, Indian Tribes, and conservation partners to address white oak restoration priorities;

(2) improving and regenerating white oak and upland oak forests and the wildlife habitat such forests provide;

(3) carrying out coordinated restoration and conservation activities that lead to the increased growth of species of white oak in native white oak regions;

(4) facilitating strategic planning to maximize the resilience of white oak systems and habitats under changing climate conditions;

(5) engaging the public through outreach, education, and citizen involvement to increase capacity and support for coordinated restoration and conservation activities for species of white oak; and

(6) increasing scientific capacity to support the planning, monitoring, and research activities necessary to carry out such coordinated restoration and conservation activities.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In establishing the Program, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall consult with—

(1) the heads of Federal agencies, including—

(A) the Director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

(B) the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service;

(2) the Governor of each State in which restoration efforts will be carried out pursuant to the Program; and

(3) Indian Tribes.

(d) DUTIES.—In carrying out the Program, the Secretary shall—

(1) draw on the best available science and management plans for species of white oak to identify, prioritize, and implement restoration and conservation activities that will improve the growth of white oak trees in the United States;

(2) collaborate and coordinate with the White Oak Restoration Initiative Coalition established by section 5311(a) to prioritize white oak restoration initiatives;

(3) adopt a white oak restoration strategy that—

(A) supports the implementation of a shared set of science-based restoration and conservation activities developed in accordance with paragraph (1);

(B) targets cost-effective projects with measurable results; and

(C) maximizes restoration outcomes with no net gain of Federal full-time equivalent employees; and

(4) establish voluntary grant and technical assistance programs in accordance with subsection (e).

(e) GRANTS AND ASSISTANCE.—

(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

(A) FOUNDATION.—The term “Foundation” means the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

(B) GRANT PROGRAM.—The term “grant program” means the voluntary grant and technical assistance program established under paragraph (2).

(2) ESTABLISHMENT.—To the extent that funds are available to carry out this section, the Secretary shall establish a voluntary grant and technical assistance program to achieve the purposes of the Program described in subsection (b).

(3) ADMINISTRATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall offer to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Foundation to manage and administer the grant program.

(B) FUNDING.—Subject to the availability of appropriations made in advance for that purpose, on entering into a cooperative agreement with the Foundation under subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall pay to the

Foundation to carry out this subsection for each fiscal year an advance payment of the entire amount for the applicable fiscal year—

(i) on October 1 of that fiscal year; or

(ii) as soon as practicable thereafter.

(4) APPLICATION OF NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHMENT ACT.—Amounts received by the Foundation to carry out the grant program shall be subject to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act (16 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.), excluding section 10(a) of that Act (16 U.S.C. 3709(a)).

(f) SUNSET.—The authority under this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5315. TREE NURSERY SHORTAGES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service, shall—

(1) develop and implement a national strategy to increase the capacity of Federal, State, and private tree nurseries and tree nurseries of Indian Tribes to address the nationwide shortage of tree seedlings; and

(2) coordinate the strategy under paragraph (1) with—

(A) the national reforestation strategy of the Forest Service; and

(B) each regional implementation plan for National Forests.

(b) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall—

(1) be based on the best available science and data, including the consideration of Indigenous knowledge; and

(2) identify and address—

(A) regional seedling shortages of bareroot and container tree seedlings;

(B) regional reforestation opportunities and the seedling supply necessary to fulfill those opportunities;

(C) opportunities to enhance seedling diversity, improve quality, quantity, genetic resources, and availability, and close gaps in seed inventories; and

(D) barriers to expanding, enhancing, or creating new infrastructure to increase nursery capacity.

**SEC. 5316. WHITE OAK RESEARCH.**

(a) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—In this section, the term “eligible institution” means an institution of higher education, including an 1862 Institution, an 1890 Institution, and a 1994 Institution (as those terms are defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601)).

(b) RESEARCH.—The Secretary may enter into a memorandum of understanding with an Indian Tribe or an eligible institution to collaboratively conduct research relating to—

(1) white oak genes with resistance or tolerance to stress;

(2) white oak trees that exhibit heritable vigor for the purpose of increasing survival and growth;

(3) establishing a genetically diverse white oak seed bank capable of responding to stressors;

(4) providing a sustainable supply of white oak seedlings and genetic resources;

(5) improved methods for aligning seed sources with the future climate at planting sites;

(6) reforestation of white oak trees through natural and artificial regeneration;

(7) improved methods for retaining and increasing white oak trees in forests;

(8) improved methods for reforesting abandoned mine land sites; and

(9) economic and social aspects of white oak forest management across land ownerships.

(c) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out research under subsection (b), an Indian Tribe or eligible institution may consult with such States, nonprofit organizations, and other institutions of higher education and scientific entities as the Indian Tribe or eligible institution determines to be appropriate.

(d) SUNSET.—The authority under this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5317. NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURE.**

(a) PARTNERSHIPS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall enter into a partnership with an eligible entity described in paragraph (2) to conduct research on improving white oak species resiliency, health, and preservation, including research on—

- (A) population-scale sequencing;
- (B) stress response traits;
- (C) seedling physiology and performance; and
- (D) white oak product development.

(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity referred to in paragraph (1) is a land-grant college or university described in subparagraph (B) that has demonstrated—

- (i) scientific expertise relating to white oak;
- (ii) the ability to rapidly transfer technologies to the stove industry;
- (iii) geographic proximity to concentrated areas of white oak; and
- (iv) support for regional economic development.

(B) LAND-GRANT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES.—A land-grant college or university referred to in subparagraph (A) is—

(i) an 1862 Institution (as defined in section 2 of the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 (7 U.S.C. 7601));

(ii) an 1890 Institution (as defined in that section); or

(iii) a 1994 Institution (as defined in section 532 of the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act of 1994 (7 U.S.C. 301 note; Public Law 103-382)).

(b) PRIORITIES.—The Secretary, acting through the Director of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, shall prioritize research relating to the resistance of white oak to disease, pest, heat, and drought in cultivated, new, and old-growth white oak timber stands.

**SEC. 5318. USDA FORMAL INITIATIVE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Natural Resources Conservation Service and in coordination with the Chief of the Forest Service, shall establish a formal initiative on white oak trees—

- (1) to reestablish white oak forests where appropriate;
- (2) to improve the management of existing white oak forests to foster natural regeneration of white oak trees;
- (3) to provide technical assistance to private landowners to reestablish, improve the management of, and naturally regenerate white oak trees;
- (4) to improve and expand white oak nursery stock; and
- (5) to adapt and improve white oak seedlings.

(b) SUNSET.—The authority under this section terminates on the date that is 7 years after the date of enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 5319. USE OF AUTHORITIES.**

To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretaries shall use the authorities provided under this title in combination with other authorities to carry out projects, including—

(1) good neighbor agreements entered into under section 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16 U.S.C. 2113a) (as amended by this division); and

(2) stewardship contracting projects entered into under section 604 of the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C. 6591c) (as amended by this division).

**TITLE IV—ENSURING CASUALTY ASSISTANCE FOR FIREFIGHTERS**

**SEC. 5401. WILDLAND FIRE MANAGEMENT CASUALTY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) NEXT-OF-KIN.—The term “next-of-kin”, with respect to an individual, means a person in the highest category of priority in relation to that individual, as determined in accordance with the following (in descending order of priority):

- (A) A legal spouse of the individual.
- (B) A child (whether by current or prior marriage) aged 18 years or older of the individual, in descending order of precedence by age.
- (C) The father or mother of the individual, unless custody has been vested by court order in another individual, with an adoptive parent taking precedence over a natural parent.
- (D) A sibling (whether whole or half) aged 18 years or older of the individual, in descending order of precedence by age.
- (E) A grandfather or grandmother of the individual.
- (F) Any other relative of the individual, with the order of precedence to be determined in accordance with the civil laws of descent of the State of domicile of the individual at time of death.

(2) PROGRAM.—The term “program” means the Wildland Fire Management Casualty Assistance Program established under subsection (b).

(b) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Interior shall establish a program, to be known as the “Wildland Fire Management Casualty Assistance Program”, to provide assistance to the next-of-kin of—

(1) firefighters who, while in the line of duty—

- (A) are killed;
- (B) require hospitalization or treatment at a medical facility due to a critical injury; or
- (C) suffer illness as a result of an exposure or incident occurring during that line of duty; and

(2) wildland fire support personnel who are killed or require hospitalization or treatment at a medical facility due to a critical injury in the line of duty.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The program shall address each of the following:

(1) The initial, and any subsequent, notification to the next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel who—

- (A) are killed in the line of duty; or
- (B) require hospitalization or treatment at a medical facility due to a critical injury or illness in the line of duty.

(2) The reimbursement of next-of-kin for expenses associated with travel to visit firefighters or wildland fire support personnel who—

- (A) are killed in the line of duty; or
- (B) require hospitalization or treatment at a medical facility due to a critical injury or illness in the line of duty.

(3) The qualifications, assignment, training, duties, supervision, and accountability for the performance of casualty assistance responsibilities.

(4) The relief or transfer of casualty assistance officers, including notification to survivors of critical injury or illness in the line of duty of the reassignment of those officers to other duties.

(5) Centralized short-term and long-term case management procedures for casualty assistance, including rapid access to expert case managers and counselors by—

- (A) survivors of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel; and
- (B) casualty assistance officers.

(6) The provision, through a computer-accessible website and other means and at no cost to survivors or next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel, of personalized, integrated information relating to Federal benefits and Federal financial assistance available to those survivors and next-of-kin.

(7) The provision to survivors and next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel of information relating to mechanisms for registering complaints about, or requests for, additional assistance related to casualty assistance.

(8) Liaison with the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Justice, and the Social Security Administration to ensure prompt and accurate resolution of issues relating to benefits administered by those agencies for survivors of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel.

(9) Data collection, in consultation with the United States Fire Administration and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, regarding the incidence and quality of casualty assistance provided to survivors and next-of-kin of firefighters or wildland fire support personnel.

(d) NO EFFECT ON OTHER LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH BENEFITS.—The program shall not affect any existing authority for line-of-duty death benefits for Federal firefighters or wildland fire support personnel.

**TITLE V—OTHER MATTERS**

**SEC. 5501. USE OF FUNDS FROM COOPERATIVE FUNDS AGREEMENTS.**

(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COOPERATIVE FUNDS AGREEMENT.—The term “cooperative funds agreement” means an agreement under—

(A) the Act of June 30, 1914 (commonly known as the “Cooperative Funds Act”) (16 U.S.C. 498); or

(B) section 1 of the Act of March 3, 1925 (16 U.S.C. 572).

(2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary, acting through the Chief of the Forest Service.

(b) TREATMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), notwithstanding any other provision of law, regulation, or agency decision, the Secretary shall fulfill the obligations of the Federal Government with respect to each cooperative funds agreement in effect on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) EXCEPTIONS.—The Secretary may waive the applicability of paragraph (1) to a cooperative funds agreement if—

- (A) the Secretary determines that 1 or more parties to the cooperative funds agreement have not fulfilled the obligations of the parties under the cooperative funds agreement; or
- (B) fulfilling the obligations of the Federal Government with respect to the cooperative funds agreement would violate section 1341 of title 31, United States Code.

(c) LIMITATIONS.—

(1) FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.—A Federal employee (including seasonal, permanent seasonal, and temporary employees) hired using funds provided under a cooperative funds agreement shall not, for the duration of the cooperative funds agreement, be subject to—

- (A) any limitation on hiring (commonly referred to as a “hiring freeze”);
- (B) any reduction in force; or
- (C) any deferred resignation or voluntary early retirement program.

(2) NON-FEDERAL FUNDS.—The non-Federal funds provided to the Secretary pursuant to a cooperative funds agreement shall not be subject to any limitation on spending.

**SEC. 5502. EMERGENCY FOREST WATERSHED PROGRAM.**

(a) FUNDING AND ADMINISTRATION.—Section 404(b) of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2204(b)) is amended by inserting “to carry out section 401” after “for a fiscal year”.

(b) EMERGENCY FOREST WATERSHED PROGRAM.—Title IV of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“SEC. 408. EMERGENCY FOREST WATERSHED PROGRAM.**

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION MEASURES.—The term ‘emergency watershed protection measures’ means measures that—

“(A) are necessary to address runoff, soil erosion, and flooding caused by a natural disaster or any other natural occurrence that has caused a sudden impairment to natural resources on National Forest System land, and the damage, if not treated—

“(i) would significantly impair or endanger the natural resources on the National Forest System land; and

“(ii) would pose an immediate risk to water resources or loss of life or property in connection to a sudden impairment of a National Forest System watershed or downstream of the National Forest System land or waterways; and

“(B) would maintain or restore forest health and forest-related resources on the National Forest System land.

“(2) NATURAL DISASTER.—The term ‘natural disaster’ has the meaning given the term in section 407(a).

“(3) SPONSOR.—The term ‘sponsor’ means—

“(A) a State or local government;

“(B) an Indian Tribe (as defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5304)); and

“(C) a water district, water conservation district, water utility, or special district.

“(b) AUTHORIZATION.—The Secretary, acting through a sponsor, is authorized to undertake emergency watershed protection measures on National Forest System land.

“(c) AGREEMENTS; PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding chapter 63 of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary may enter into an agreement with a sponsor and make payments to the sponsor, on request of the sponsor, to carry out emergency watershed protection measures.

“(2) REQUIREMENTS.—

“(A) PROJECT TIMELINES.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Following a natural disaster or natural occurrence that necessitates the carrying out of emergency watershed protection measures, the Secretary shall execute agreements under paragraph (1) as expeditiously as possible.

“(ii) TIMELINE.—Each agreement under paragraph (1) shall include a timeline by which the sponsor shall complete all emergency watershed protection measures during the 2-year period following the conclusion of the applicable natural disaster or natural occurrence, as determined by the Secretary, that necessitated the carrying out of those measures.

“(iii) CONTINUED MONITORING.—A sponsor that has entered into an agreement under paragraph (1) may monitor, maintain, repair, or replace emergency watershed protection measures for a period of not more than 3 years following the conclusion of the natural disaster or natural occurrence, as determined by the Secretary, that necessitated the carrying out of those measures when failure to do so would result in unacceptable

risk to National Forest System land or downstream water users.

“(B) PAYMENTS.—The Secretary, in accordance with an agreement entered into under paragraph (1)—

“(i) may make partial payments prior to completion of the applicable project; and

“(ii) shall make final payment for the project not later than 30 days after the date on which the project is completed.

“(d) WAIVED MATCHING REQUIREMENTS.—The Secretary shall waive any matching requirements for payments made under subsection (c)(1).

“(e) LIABILITY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—A sponsor that carries out emergency watershed protection measures pursuant to an agreement under subsection (c)(1) shall not be required to indemnify the United States for any liability resulting from carrying out emergency watershed protection measures pursuant to that agreement.

“(2) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Nothing in this subsection precludes liability for damages or costs relating to the carrying out of emergency watershed protection measures by a sponsor pursuant to an agreement entered into under subsection (c)(1) if the sponsor acted with willful or wanton negligence or reckless conduct in carrying out those measures.

“(f) ASSUMPTION OF RISK.—A sponsor that carries out emergency watershed protection measures prior to entering into an agreement under subsection (c)(1) shall assume the risk of incurring any cost or liability resulting from carrying out those measures.”.

**SEC. 5503. IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY CONSERVATION PROGRAM.**

Section 401 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2201) is amended—

(1) in subsection (b)—

(A) in the subsection heading, by inserting “AND OTHER EMERGENCY CONSERVATION MEASURES” after “FENCING”;

(B) in paragraph (1)—

(i) by inserting “or for other emergency measures to replace or restore farmland or conservation structures requiring an immediate response (as determined by the Secretary),” after “replacement of fencing;”; and

(ii) by striking “option of receiving” and all that follows through the period at the end and inserting the following: “option of receiving, before the agricultural producer carries out the repair, replacement, or restoration—

“(A) with respect to a payment to the agricultural producer for a replacement, 75 percent of the cost of the replacement, as determined by the Secretary; and

“(B) with respect to a payment to the agricultural producer for a repair or restoration, 50 percent of the cost of the repair or restoration, as determined by the Secretary.”;

(C) in paragraph (2), by striking “60-day” and inserting “180-day”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(c) WILDFIRE DETERMINATION.—A wildfire that causes damage eligible for a payment under subsection (a) includes—

“(1) a wildfire that is not caused naturally, if the damage is caused by the spread of the wildfire due to natural causes; and

“(2) a wildfire that is caused by the Federal Government.”.

**SEC. 5504. IMPROVING THE EMERGENCY FOREST RESTORATION PROGRAM.**

Section 407 of the Agricultural Credit Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2206) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)(2), by striking “wildfires,” and inserting “wildfires (including a wildfire that is not caused naturally, if the damage is caused by the spread of the

wildfire due to natural causes, and a wildfire that is caused by the Federal Government).”;

(2) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (f); and

(3) by inserting after subsection (d) the following:

“(e) ADVANCE PAYMENTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall give an owner of nonindustrial private forest land the option of receiving, before the owner carries out emergency measures under this section, not more than 75 percent of the cost of the emergency measures, as determined by the Secretary.

“(2) RETURN OF FUNDS.—If the funds provided under paragraph (1) are not expended by the end of the 180-day period beginning on the date on which the owner of nonindustrial private forest land receives those funds, the funds shall be returned within a reasonable timeframe, as determined by the Secretary.”.

**SEC. 5505. ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIFIED DISASTER ASSISTANCE INTAKE PROCESS AND SYSTEM.**

The Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

**“SEC. 707. ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIFIED DISASTER ASSISTANCE INTAKE PROCESS AND SYSTEM.**

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term ‘Administrator’ means the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“(2) APPLICANT.—The term ‘applicant’ means—

“(A) an individual, business, or organization that applies for disaster assistance from a disaster assistance program;

“(B) an individual, business, or organization on behalf of which an individual described in subparagraph (A) applies for disaster assistance from a disaster assistance program; and

“(C) an individual, business, or organization that seeks assistance as a beneficiary of a State, local government, or Indian tribal government that received assistance under a disaster assistance program.

“(3) DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCY.—The term ‘disaster assistance agency’ means—

“(A) the Federal Emergency Management Agency; and

“(B) any Federal agency that provides disaster assistance to individuals, businesses, organizations, States, local governments, Indian tribal governments, communities, or organizations that the Administrator certifies as a disaster assistance agency in accordance with subsection (f) to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program.

“(4) DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.—The term ‘disaster assistance information’ includes any personal, biographical, demographic, geographical, financial, application decision, or other information that a disaster assistance agency, or a recipient of a Federal block grant from a disaster assistance agency, is authorized to collect, maintain, disclose, or use to—

“(A) process an application for disaster assistance from a disaster assistance program; or

“(B) otherwise carry out the purpose of a disaster assistance program.

“(5) DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.—The term ‘disaster assistance program’ means—

“(A) a program that provides disaster assistance to individuals and households under title IV or V in accordance with sections 408 and 502; or

“(B) any other assistance program authorized by a Federal statute or funded with Federal appropriations under which a disaster assistance agency awards or distributes disaster assistance to an individual, household,

or organization, or provides a Federal block grant for these purposes, that arises from a major disaster or emergency declared under section 401 or 501, respectively, including—

“(i) disaster assistance;

“(ii) long-term disaster recovery assistance;

“(iii) the post-disaster restoration of infrastructure and housing;

“(iv) post-disaster economic revitalization;

“(v) a loan authorized under section 7(b) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 636(b)); and

“(vi) food benefit allotments under section 412 of this Act and section 5(h) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2014(h)).

“(6) RECORD.—The term ‘record’ has the meaning given the term in section 552a of title 5, United States Code.

“(b) UNIFIED DISASTER ASSISTANCE INTAKE PROCESS AND SYSTEM.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 360 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall, in consultation with appropriate Federal, State, local, and Indian tribal governments and entities, develop and establish a unified intake process and system for applicants for disaster assistance provided by a disaster assistance agency to—

“(A) facilitate a consolidated application for any form of disaster assistance provided by a disaster assistance agency when appropriate to support the nature and purposes of the assistance;

“(B) carry out the purposes of disaster assistance programs swiftly, efficiently, fairly, and in accordance with applicable laws and privacy and data protections; and

“(C) support the detection, prevention, and investigation of waste, fraud, abuse, or discrimination in the administration of disaster assistance programs, which may include the support of the Do Not Pay working system described in section 3354(c) of title 31, United States Code.

“(2) CAPABILITIES OF THE CONSOLIDATED APPLICATION SYSTEM.—The unified intake process and system established under paragraph (1) shall—

“(A) accept applications for disaster assistance programs;

“(B) allow for applicants to receive status updates on applications for disaster assistance programs;

“(C) allow for applicants to update disaster assistance information throughout the recovery journeys of those applicants;

“(D) allow for the distribution of information on additional recovery resources to disaster survivors that may be available in a disaster-stricken jurisdiction, in coordination with appropriate Federal, State, local, and Tribal partners;

“(E) provide disaster survivors with information and documentation on the applications of those disaster survivors for a disaster assistance program;

“(F) allow for the distribution of application data to support faster and more effective distribution of Federal disaster assistance, including block grant assistance, for disaster recovery;

“(G) allow for disaster assistance agencies to communicate directly with disaster survivors; and

“(H) contain other capabilities determined necessary by the heads of disaster assistance agencies.

“(3) UPDATES.—Not later than 30 days after the date on which the Administrator receives a request from a disaster assistance agency to update questions in the consolidated application described in paragraph (1) needed to administer the disaster assistance programs of the disaster assistance agency, the Administrator shall make those updates.

“(c) AUTHORITIES OF ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator may—

“(1) collect, maintain, disclose, and use disaster assistance information, including such information received from any disaster assistance agency, with any other disaster assistance agency for purposes of subsection (b)(1); and

“(2) subject to subsection (d), authorize the collection, maintenance, disclosure, and use of disaster assistance information collected on or after the date of enactment of this section by publishing a notice on a public website that—

“(A) includes a detailed description of—

“(i) the specific disaster assistance information authorized to be collected, maintained, disclosed, and used;

“(ii) why the collection, maintenance, disclosure, or use of the disaster assistance information is necessary to carry out the purpose of a disaster assistance program;

“(iii) how the collection, maintenance, disclosure, and use of disaster assistance information incorporates fair information practices; and

“(iv) the disaster assistance agencies that will be granted access to the disaster assistance information to carry out the purpose of any disaster assistance program; and

“(B) provides that the submission of an application through a unified disaster application constitutes prior written consent to disclose disaster assistance information to disaster assistance agencies for the purpose of section 552a(b) of title 5, United States Code.

“(d) COLLECTION AND SHARING OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION.—

“(1) EFFECT OF PUBLICATION OF NOTICE ON PUBLIC WEBSITE.—The publication of a notice by the Administrator on a public website of a revision to the system of records of the unified intake process and system established under subsection (b)(1) prior to any new collection, maintenance, disclosure, or use of records to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program with respect to a major disaster or emergency declared by the President under section 401 or 501, respectively, of this Act shall be deemed to satisfy the notice and publication requirements of section 552a(e)(4) of title 5, United States Code, for the entire period of performance for any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program.

“(2) PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT WAIVER.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Upon the declaration of a major disaster or emergency pursuant to section 401 or 501, respectively, of this Act, the Administrator may waive the requirements of subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Paperwork Reduction Act’), with respect to the voluntary collection of information specific to the declared major disaster or emergency needed to carry out the purposes of a disaster assistance program.

“(B) DURATION.—A waiver described in subparagraph (A) shall be in effect for the entire period of performance for any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program with respect to a declared major disaster or emergency.

“(C) TRANSPARENCY.—If the Administrator waives the requirements described in subparagraph (A), the Administrator shall—

“(i) promptly post on a public website—

“(I) a brief justification for the waiver; and

“(II) the agencies and offices to which the waiver shall apply;

“(ii) update the information posted under clause (i), as applicable; and

“(iii) comply with the requirements of subchapter I of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code (commonly known as the ‘Paperwork Reduction Act’) upon the expiration of the period of performance of any assistance provided under a disaster assistance program if the collection of information may be utilized for the purposes of supporting the dis-

aster assistance program in future major disaster or emergency declarations.

“(D) EFFECTIVENESS OF WAIVER.—Any waiver under subparagraph (A) shall take effect on the date on which the Administrator posts information on the internet website as provided for under subparagraph (C).

“(e) DATA SECURITY.—The Administrator shall facilitate the collection of disaster assistance information into a unified application only after—

“(1) the Administrator certifies that the unified application substantially complies with the data security standards established pursuant to subchapter II of chapter 35 of title 44, United States Code, and any other applicable Federal information security policy;

“(2) the Secretary of Homeland Security publishes a privacy impact assessment for the unified application that is similar to the privacy assessment conducted under section 208(b)(1)(B) of the E-Government Act of 2002 (44 U.S.C. 3501 note); and

“(3) the Administrator, in consultation with disaster assistance agencies, publishes standard rules of behavior for disaster assistance agencies and personnel granted access to disaster assistance information to protect such information from improper disclosure.

“(f) CERTIFICATION OF DISASTER ASSISTANCE AGENCIES.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator may certify a Federal agency as a disaster assistance agency only after posting an agreement between the Administrator and the Federal agency on a public website that contains the detailed terms of the agreement.

“(2) CONTENTS OF AGREEMENT.—An agreement between the Administrator and a Federal agency described in paragraph (1) shall state that the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal agency will—

“(A) collect, disclose, maintain, and use disaster assistance information in accordance with—

“(i) this section; and

“(ii) subject to subsection (i)(2), any existing policies of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Federal agency for information protection and use;

“(B) train any personnel granted access to disaster assistance information on the rules of behavior established by the Administrator under subsection (e)(3);

“(C) in the event of any unauthorized disclosure of disaster assistance information—

“(i) not later than 24 hours after discovering the unauthorized disclosure—

“(I) in the case of an unauthorized disclosure by the Federal agency, notify the Administrator of the disclosure; and

“(II) in the case of an unauthorized disclosure by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, notify disaster assistance agencies of the disclosure;

“(ii) cooperate fully with the Administrator and disaster assistance agencies in the investigation and remediation of the disclosure; and

“(iii) cooperate fully in the prosecution of a person responsible for the disclosure; and

“(D) assume responsibility for any compensation, civil liability, or other remediation measure awarded by a judgment of a court or agreed upon as a compromise of any potential claim by or on behalf of an applicant, including by obtaining credit monitoring and remediation services, for an improper disclosure of disaster assistance information that is—

“(i) caused, directly or indirectly, by the acts or omissions of an officer, employee, or contractor of the Federal agency; or

“(ii) from any electronic system of records that was created or maintained by the Federal agency pursuant to section 552a(e) of title 5, United States Code.

“(g) CERTIFICATION FOR NONPARTICIPATION.—

“(1) COVERED DISASTER ASSISTANCE DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘covered disaster assistance’ means—

“(A) disaster assistance that a Federal agency is automatically authorized to provide following a major disaster or emergency declared under section 401 or 501; or

“(B) disaster assistance that is authorized and funded under an appropriations Act specifically related to a major disaster or emergency declared under section 401 or 501.

“(2) REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this section, and every 4 years thereafter, a Federal agency that is providing covered disaster assistance, but has chosen not to participate in the unified intake process and system established under subsection (b)(1), shall provide to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a certification detailing—

“(A) why the Federal agency is not participating in the unified intake process and system established under subsection (b)(1); and

“(B) the stakeholders with which the Federal agency consulted to reach the decision under subparagraph (A).

“(h) REPORTS.—

“(1) FEMA.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this section, and every year thereafter for 2 years, the Administrator, in coordination with the heads of disaster assistance agencies, shall submit to Congress a report on the implementation of this section, including—

“(A) how disaster assistance agencies are working together to implement the requirements under this section;

“(B) the effect of this section on disaster survivor burden and the speed and efficiency of delivering disaster assistance; and

“(C) a description of any other challenges that require further legislative action.

“(2) GAO.—Not later than 3 years after the date of enactment of this section, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to Congress a report on how the implementation of this section has affected the disaster survivor experience, and any recommendations for improvements to the requirements under this section.

“(i) BRIEFINGS.—Not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of this section, and again not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this section, the Administrator shall brief Congress on—

“(1) the status of the implementation of the requirements under this section; and

“(2) how disaster assistance agencies are working together to implement the requirements under this section.

“(j) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

“(1) INAPPLICABILITY OF MATCHING PROGRAM PROVISIONS.—The disclosure and use of disaster assistance information subject to the requirements of section 552a of title 5, United States Code, among disaster assistance agencies or with State, local, or Tribal governments carrying out disaster assistance programs shall not—

“(A) be construed as a matching program for the purpose of section 552a(a)(8) of title 5, United States Code; or

“(B) be subject to subsection (e)(12), (o), (p)(1)(A)(ii), (q), (r), or (u) of section 552a of title 5, United States Code.

“(2) CLARIFICATIONS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize the Administrator to make decisions relating to the disaster assistance program of an agency other than the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

“(B) REDUCING BURDENS ON DISASTER SURVIVORS.—The purpose of this section is solely to improve the intake and sharing of information to reduce burdens on survivors of major disasters and emergencies.

“(3) AUTHORITIES IN OTHER LAWS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect the authority of an entity to share disaster assistance information regarding programs funded or facilitated by the entity in accordance with any other law or agency policy.

“(4) APPLYING TO MULTIPLE PROGRAMS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require an applicant to apply to more than 1 disaster assistance program.

“(5) PROGRAM AUTHORIZATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to authorize a program that is not authorized by law as of the date of enactment of this section.

“(6) AGREEMENTS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring a Federal agency to sign an agreement described in subsection (f)(2) if the head of that Federal agency determines that the inclusion of the disaster assistance programs under the jurisdiction of the Federal agency in the unified intake process and system established under subsection (b)(1) is not appropriate to support the nature and purposes of those disaster assistance programs.”.

**SA 5891.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. THUNE to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

**SEC. 1252. MEASURES TO ADDRESS MONEY LAUNDERING AND EXPORT CONTROL AND SANCTIONS VIOLATIONS IN HONG KONG.**

(a) DETERMINATION WITH RESPECT TO MONEY LAUNDERING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a determination, including a detailed justification, of whether reasonable grounds exist for concluding that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China is a jurisdiction of primary money laundering concern under section 5318A of title 31, United States Code.

(b) REPORT ON ROLE OF HONG KONG IN EXPORT CONTROL AND SANCTIONS VIOLATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 360 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Treasury, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Commerce, shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report assessing the ability of United States and foreign financial institutions operating in Hong Kong to identify and prevent transactions that facilitate the transfer of products, technology, and money to the Russian Federation, Iran, and other countries and entities in violation of export controls and sanctions imposed by the United States.

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

(A) an evaluation of the extent of the role of Hong Kong as an international financial and trading center in facilitating, knowingly or unknowingly—

(i) the transfer of commodities, software, or technology to adversaries of the United

States, including the Russian Federation, Iran, the mainland of the People’s Republic of China, and other countries in violation of export controls imposed by the United States; and

(ii) trade and financial transactions that may implicate sanctions imposed by the United States on the Russian Federation, Iran, and other countries and entities;

(B) an assessment of whether the People’s Republic of China’s 2020 National Security Law and the January 2024 Safeguarding National Security Ordinance of Hong Kong have limited the ability of financial institutions operating in Hong Kong to adhere to global standards for anti-money laundering and know-your-customer procedures; and

(C) a description of cooperation between Hong Kong and United States authorities in enforcing export control and sanctions regimes, including any challenges to such cooperation.

(c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term ‘‘appropriate congressional committees’’ means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

**SA 5892.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. THUNE to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle E of title XII, add the following:

**SEC. 1270A. STRATEGY TO COUNTER IRANIAN AND HEZBOLLAH INFLUENCE OPERATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA.**

(a) SHORT TITLES.—This section may be cited as the ‘‘Barring Adversarial Networks and Notorious Extremist Destabilizers in Latin America Act’’ or the ‘‘BANNED in Latin America Act’’.

(b) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a comprehensive strategy to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives for countering Iran’s and Hezbollah’s propaganda, missionary networks, and influence operations in Latin America.

(c) CONTENTS OF STRATEGY.—The strategy required under subsection (b) shall include—

(1) measures that address the proliferation of Iranian cultural centers in Latin America that promote Iranian ideology, including diplomatic efforts to limit their operations, sanctions on affiliated entities, and public diplomacy to expose their activities;

(2) actions that restrict the travel and activities of Iranian emissaries, including diplomats, cultural attaches, and other agents who facilitate propaganda, radicalization, and terror-supporting networks in Latin America, through visa denials, sanctions, or other travel restrictions;

(3) initiatives that strengthen the capacity of United States intelligence agencies to identify, monitor, and disrupt Iran’s and Hezbollah’s networks, including their cooperation academic institutions and non-governmental organizations in Latin America;

(4) a framework for taking actions, similar to those implemented against Al-Manar and Press TV, to disrupt Iran's HispanTV and Hezbollah's Al Mayadeen Español platforms, including sanctions, designations, and cooperation with regional partners to limit their broadcasting reach and digital presence; and

(5) a plan to address Iran's Al Mustafa International University network and its affiliated entities, including by designating them as foreign terrorist organizations or specially designated global terrorists, as appropriate, due to their respective roles in radicalization and recruitment for Iran's ideological and terrorist objectives.

(d) FORM.—The strategy required under subsection (b) shall be submitted in unclassified form and may include a classified annex.

**SA 5893.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mr. MERKLEY)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. THUNE to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XII, add the following:

**Subtitle F—Coordination on Uyghur Issues**

**SEC. 1271. SHORT TITLE.**

This subtitle may be cited as the “Uyghur Policy Act of 2026”.

**SEC. 1272. FINDINGS.**

Congress finds the following:

(1) The People's Republic of China (referred to in this subtitle as the “PRC”) continues to repress the distinct Islamic, Turkic identity of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (referred to in this subtitle as the “XUAR”) in northwestern China and other areas in which they have habitually resided.

(2) Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities historically making up the majority of the XUAR population have maintained a distinct religious and cultural identity throughout their history.

(3) The PRC—

(A) ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, done at New York, December 16, 1966, and is thereby bound by its provisions; and

(B) signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, done at New York December 19, 1966.

(4) PRC authorities manipulated the strategic objectives of the international war on terror to mask their increasing cultural and religious oppression of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups residing in the XUAR.

(5) In 2014, PRC authorities launched the “Strike Hard Against Violent Extremism” campaign, in which dubious allegations of widespread extremist activity were used as justification for violations of internationally recognized human rights committed against Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR.

(6) PRC authorities have made use of its legal system as a tool of repression, including for the imposition of arbitrary detentions and torture against members of the Uyghur community and other ethnic and religious minority groups.

(7) Uyghurs and Kazakhs who have secured citizenship or permanent residency outside of the PRC have attested to repeated

threats, harassment, and surveillance by PRC officials.

(8) Reporting from international news organizations has found that during the past decade, in order to silence dissent or to force exiled or other overseas Uyghurs to return to the PRC, family members of such Uyghur individuals or members of other ethnic and religious minority groups living inside the PRC have disappeared or been detained by PRC authorities.

(9) In February 2025, Thai authorities refouled 40 detained Uyghurs to Xinjiang, ignoring warnings from the United States Government and Congress.

(10) In 2017, Radio Free Asia's Uyghur Service was the first media organization to report on the PRC's vast, mass arbitrary-detention program in the XUAR.

(11) International civil society has compiled credible evidence that—

(A) more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups were detained in extrajudicial “vocational education and training centers”; and

(B) thousands more such individuals continue to be coerced to participate in state-led forced labor transfer programs.

(12) Independent accounts from former detainees of “vocational education and training” centers describe inhumane conditions and treatment, including forced political indoctrination, torture, beatings, rape, forced sterilization, and food deprivation.

(13) Former detainees also confirmed that they were told by guards that the only way to secure release was to demonstrate sufficient political loyalty to the Government of the PRC.

(14) Discourse surrounding the ongoing atrocities in the XUAR, including efforts to support the Uyghur community, remains limited in most Muslim majority nations around the world.

(15) Former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo determined, and both former Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Secretary of State Marco Rubio reaffirmed, that the Government of the PRC continues to commit genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in the XUAR.

(16) Multiple foreign government bodies have declared that atrocities by the Government of the PRC against Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR constitute genocide, including the European Parliament and the parliaments of Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, respectively.

(17) On March 12, 2026, China's National People's Congress adopted the Law on Promoting Ethnic Unity and Progress, which mandates Mandarin instruction for minority children beginning in preschool and subjects all ethnic affairs to party authority, systematically eroding the linguistic and cultural identity of Uyghurs and other minority groups.

**SEC. 1273. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Government of the PRC should—

(A) recognize, and take tangible steps to protect and preserve, the distinct ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic identity of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR;

(B) immediately cease all government-sponsored crackdowns, imprisonments, and detentions of people throughout the XUAR aimed at repressing their ethnic, cultural, political, or religious identities; and

(C) cease all government-sponsored transnational repression of Uyghurs, including the detention, harassment, intimidat-

tion, and surveillance of the family members of exiled Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and minority groups in the XUAR;

(2) the Government of the PRC should immediately open the XUAR to regular, transparent, and unmanipulated visits by—

(A) members of the press;

(B) international organizations;

(C) academic and research institutions focused on internationally recognized human rights; and

(D) foreign delegations, including delegations from the United States;

(3) it is commendable that countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Australia, Japan, and Türkiye, among others, have provided shelter and hospitality to Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority group members in exile from the PRC;

(4) the Government of the PRC should immediately grant unconditional release of all prisoners that have been detained for their ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic identities, for expressing their political or religious beliefs in the XUAR, or for being related to members of the Uyghur diaspora or activist community, including—

(A) Ekpar Asat, who participated in the Department of State's International Visitors Leadership Program in 2016, was incarcerated after returning to the XUAR, and is now serving a 15-year prison sentence on charges of “inciting ethnic hatred and ethnic discrimination”;

(B) Dr. Gulshan Abbas, a Uyghur retired medical doctor who was unjustly detained in the XUAR on September 11, 2018, and unfairly sentenced to 20 years in prison in retaliation for her sister's advocacy for Uyghurs;

(C) Iilham Tohti, a Uyghur economics professor who advocated for improving Uyghur-Han relations and improving the implementation of regional autonomy laws in the PRC, was detained on January 15, 2014, and sentenced to life in prison on charges of “separatism”; and

(D) Rahile Dawut, a professor who researched Uyghur folklore and traditions and was detained in 2017 and sentenced to life in prison on charges of “splittism” and “endangering State security”;

(5) the Government of the PRC should facilitate comprehensive access for international organizations, to “vocational education and training” centers, prisons, and factories in the XUAR; and

(6) the Department of State should continue to facilitate the unhindered dissemination of information to the international community regarding the status of internationally recognized human rights, religious freedom, and transnational repression of Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR.

**SEC. 1274. UNITED STATES STRENGTHENING OF COORDINATION ON UYGHUR ISSUES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State should, as appropriate—

(1) prioritize policies, programs, and projects, in coordination with other relevant agencies, to support Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR;

(2) vigorously promote policies to protect the distinct ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic identities of the Uyghurs and other minority groups;

(3) maintain close contact with Uyghur religious, cultural, and political leaders, including by seeking regular travel to the XUAR and visiting Uyghur diaspora communities around the world;

(4) advocate for the release of political prisoners in the XUAR who were detained for exercising their internationally recognized human rights to put pressure on exiled Uyghurs;

(5) regularly consult with Congress regarding policies relevant to the XUAR and the Uyghurs;

(6) engage with counterparts in Europe, Central Asia, and member states of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation—

(A) to promote internationally recognized human rights and religious freedom for Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR; and

(B) to develop and implement joint initiatives and programs aimed at promoting awareness and supporting Uyghur victims of detention, harassment, and transnational repression;

(7) develop a strategy to work with foreign partners to pressure the Government of the PRC—

(A) to close all detention facilities and “vocational education and training” camps housing Uyghurs and members of other ethnic and religious minority groups in the XUAR;

(B) to allow unhindered access to detention facilities and “vocational education and training” camps in the XUAR by independent media, researchers, and international organizations for a comprehensive assessment; and

(C) to protect internationally recognized human rights and preserve the distinct religious and cultural identity of the Uyghurs and other religious and ethnic minority communities in the XUAR;

(8) work with international partners—

(A) to raise awareness regarding transnational repression of Uyghur Americans or Uyghurs who are living in exile in the United States; and

(B) to develop and implement strategies to prevent and respond to such transnational repression; and

(9) establish a mechanism for individuals to report incidents of transnational repression against Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups with ties to the XUAR.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following 3 years, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, with a classified annex, if necessary, that—

(1) lists the actions described in subsection (a) that were taken by the Secretary during the reporting period, including programs and engagements with foreign governments;

(2) describes actions taken by the United States Government to address and prevent transnational repression against Uyghurs in the United States; and

(3) includes recommendations for further legislative or policy measures in support of the internationally recognized human rights of Uyghurs and other ethnic and religious minority groups from the XUAR.

(c) SUNSET.—The requirements under this section shall cease to have any force or effect beginning on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 1275. NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.**

No additional funds are authorized to carry out the requirements under this subtitle. Such requirements shall be carried out using amounts otherwise authorized for similar purposes.

**SEC. 1276. REQUIREMENT FOR UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING.**

(a) UYGHUR LANGUAGE TRAINING AND STAFFING.—The Secretary of State may take such steps as may be necessary to ensure that—

(1) Uyghur language training is available to Foreign Service officers; and

(2) efforts are made to ensure that at least 1 Uyghur-speaking member of the Service (as

defined in section 103 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3903)) is assigned to—

(A) one United States diplomatic or consular post in the People’s Republic of China; and

(B) one United States diplomatic or consular post in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, or Türkiye.

(b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Foreign Service Institute shall submit a report to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives that outlines all of the steps that have been taken to implement subsection (a).

**SEC. 1277. UYGHUR CONSIDERATIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS.**

The President shall direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at every United States multilateral mission—

(1) to oppose any efforts to prevent consideration of the gross violation of internationally recognized human rights in the XUAR in any body of the United Nations;

(2) to oppose any actions to prevent the participation of advocates for internationally recognized human rights of Uyghurs in nongovernmental fora hosted by, or otherwise organized under the auspices of, any body of the United Nations; and

(3) to support the creation or appointment of a special rapporteur for the XUAR for the purposes of—

(A) monitoring violations and abuses of internationally recognized human rights in the XUAR; and

(B) making reports containing information about such violations and abuses available to the General Assembly of the United Nations and other United Nations affiliated agencies, bodies, entities, and member states.

**SA 5894.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Ms. ROSEN)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. Thune to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XII, add the following:

**Subtitle F—Critical Undersea Infrastructure Resilience Initiative Act**

**SEC. 1281. SHORT TITLE.**

This subtitle may be cited as the “Critical Undersea Infrastructure Resilience Initiative Act”.

**SEC. 1282. FINDINGS.**

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Government of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has increasingly used gray zone tactics to undermine the security of Taiwan and change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait, including suspected sabotage of undersea cables in and around Taiwan, such as the incidents involving the severing of cables around the Matsu Islands of Taiwan and other key regions in 2023 and 2025.

(2) Undersea cables and other critical undersea infrastructure are a primary vulnerability for Taiwan that could be targeted by the PRC to cripple the communication capabilities of Taiwan in the event of a conflict in the Taiwan Strait and of broader hybrid warfare tactics. Disruption of critical undersea infrastructure would significantly impact the ability of Taiwan to communicate

both domestically and internationally, leading to a breakdown in military, economic, and social functions.

(3) The vulnerability of Taiwan to attacks on critical undersea infrastructure has been compounded by an increasing number of foreign vessels suspected of involvement in sabotage, including PRC-linked vessels, which pose direct threats to Taiwan’s critical infrastructure.

(4) The ability of the PRC to disrupt or damage critical undersea infrastructure is a critical element of its strategy aimed at disrupting Taiwan’s military and civil communications and isolating Taiwan in the event of a blockade, quarantine, or other attempt to force unification with the PRC.

(5) Recent activities by foreign adversaries, particularly the PRC, have increased the risk of sabotage and disruption to critical undersea infrastructure serving Taiwan and other nations, including—

(A) in February 2023, two vessels registered to the PRC severed two undersea cables that effectively cut internet access to the 13,000 residents of Taiwan’s Matsu Islands, who had to rely on microwave radio transmissions to provide limited internet access for 50 days until a cable ship was able to complete repairs;

(B) in January 2025, Taiwan’s Chunghwa Telecom reported damage to an undersea cable north of Taipei and identified a “suspicious vessel” registered as the Shunxin-39 and the Xin Shun-39, which had traveled in a criss-cross pattern while dragging its anchor near where the cable was damaged;

(C) in January 2025, a Mongolia-flagged vessel named the Baoshun was driven away by Taiwan’s coast guard after suspicious movements off the coast of New Taipei; and

(D) in February 2025, Taiwan’s coast guard detained the Togo-flagged Hong Tai 58 near Taiwan’s Penghu Islands after an undersea cable in the area was severed, with the captain later admitting to dropping the ship’s anchor in the area and that he “might have broken the cable”.

(6) Since 2023, there have been at least 11 cases of damage to undersea cables around Taiwan and a similar number in the Baltic Sea, with authorities in Taiwan and Europe suspecting PRC and Russian involvement and possible coordination in several incidents. Those incidents highlight the vulnerability of critical undersea infrastructure, as well as the difficulty of proving sabotage or holding perpetrators accountable.

(7) The sabotage of critical undersea infrastructure constitutes gray zone tactics designed to destabilize and undermine international security while falling short of direct military confrontation.

(8) Several regional mechanisms have been established to bolster the security of undersea cables, including the Nordic Warden initiative for maritime domain awareness and the Quad Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience, aimed at enhancing the security and resilience of undersea cables in the Indo-Pacific.

(9) Taiwan is the world’s 21st largest economy by purchasing power parity and deeply integrated in the global information and communications technology supply chain. Any restrictions to its internet connectivity or energy security would have a direct impact on the world’s economy.

(10) To counter the threats described in this section and safeguard the resilience of Taiwan, it is imperative for the United States and its allies to take decisive action to bolster Taiwan’s defenses for critical undersea infrastructure and foster international cooperation to protect those critical assets.

**SEC. 1283. DEFINITIONS.**

In this subtitle:

(1) **CRITICAL UNDERSEA INFRASTRUCTURE.**—The term “critical undersea infrastructure” means—

(A) subsea energy infrastructure, including a subsea cable, pipeline, or other equipment installed on, beneath, or within the seabed, to transmit electricity (including via subsea electricity cables, subsea electricity transformers, or equipment related to the support of offshore energy production installations) or to transport natural gas, oil, or hydrogen between land-based or off-shore infrastructure, as well as associated landing stations and facilities; or

(B) subsea telecommunications infrastructure, including subsea fiber-optic cables and related equipment installed on, beneath, or within the seabed, and used to transmit communications, data, voice, video, or other electronic signals, as well as associated landing stations and facilities.

(2) **SABOTAGE.**—The term “sabotage” means actions, or preparations for future actions, taken with the intent to cause defective production of, operation of, or damage to critical undersea infrastructure, including the integrity of data transmitted via subsea telecommunications infrastructure.

**SEC. 1284. TAIWAN CRITICAL UNDERSEA INFRASTRUCTURE RESILIENCE INITIATIVE.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT.**—Not later than 360 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, the Commandant of the Coast Guard, and such other heads of agencies as the Secretary of State considers relevant, shall establish an initiative to be known as the “Taiwan Critical Undersea Infrastructure Initiative” (in this section referred to as the “Initiative”).

(b) **PRIORITY.**—The Initiative shall prioritize the protection and resilience of critical undersea infrastructure near Taiwan, with a focus on countering threats from the PRC.

(c) **KEY FOCUS AREAS.**—

(1) **ADVANCED MONITORING AND DETECTION CAPABILITIES.**—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense, shall develop and deploy advanced critical undersea infrastructure monitoring systems capable of detecting disruptions or potential sabotage in real-time, including by informing Taiwan, as appropriate, of early warnings about risks to Taiwan’s critical undersea infrastructure from global intelligence networks.

(2) **RAPID RESPONSE PROTOCOLS.**—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary of State shall—

(A) in cooperation with regional partners, establish rapid response protocols for damaged critical undersea infrastructure or mitigating disruptions; and

(B) work with allies and partners of the United States to help Taiwan and regional partners develop the logistical capacity to respond quickly to attacks on critical undersea infrastructure and minimize downtime.

(3) **ENHANCING MARITIME DOMAIN AWARENESS.**—In carrying out the Initiative—

(A) the Secretary of the Navy and the Commandant of the Coast Guard, in collaboration with the Coast Guard of Taiwan and regional partners, shall enhance maritime domain awareness around Taiwan, focusing on the ability to detect and interdict suspicious vessels or activities near critical undersea infrastructure; and

(B) the Commandant of the Coast Guard shall assist in joint patrols and surveillance, particularly in the Taiwan Strait and surrounding maritime zones, to monitor potential threats and prevent sabotage.

(4) **INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR PROTECTION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary of State shall seek to establish cooperative frameworks with regional and global partners to protect undersea cable networks near Taiwan.

(B) **ELEMENTS.**—The frameworks established under subparagraph (A) shall provide for participation by the United States in joint drills, intelligence-sharing platforms, and collaborative surveillance operations to enhance collective security against sabotage.

(5) **TAIWAN-SPECIFIC CABLE HARDENING.**—In carrying out the Initiative, the Secretary of State shall encourage and support the hardening of critical undersea infrastructure near Taiwan, including reinforcing cables, improving burial depths, and using more resilient materials to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters and sabotage.

**SEC. 1285. COUNTERING PRC GRAY ZONE TACTICS.**

(a) **WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO COUNTER PRC SABOTAGE.**—The President shall work with like-minded international partners to implement strategies that directly counter the Government of the PRC’s critical undersea infrastructure sabotage activities as part of its gray zone warfare, including by increasing diplomatic pressure on the PRC to adhere to international norms regarding the protection of critical undersea infrastructure.

(b) **RAISING AWARENESS.**—The President shall work with like-minded international partners to raise global awareness of the risks posed by the PRC’s sabotage of critical undersea infrastructure, including through public diplomacy efforts, information sharing, and participation in international forums that address gray zone tactics and the protection of critical undersea infrastructure.

**SEC. 1286. IMPOSITION OF SANCTIONS WITH RESPECT TO CRITICAL UNDERSEA INFRASTRUCTURE SABOTAGE.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The President, in coordination with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury, shall impose the sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to any foreign person that the President determines, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, is responsible for acts of sabotage, or facilitates acts of sabotage, against undersea infrastructure critical to the security of Taiwan or other United States allies or partners, including—

(1) any foreign vessel or entity the owner or operator of which knowingly—

(A) commits acts of sabotage; or

(B) conducts preparatory surveillance, logistical support, security, or other services that facilitate or enable an act of sabotage; and

(2) any foreign person that knowingly—

(A) owns, operates, or manages a vessel or entity described in paragraph (1);

(B) provides underwriting services or insurance or reinsurance necessary for such a vessel or entity;

(C) facilitates deceptive or structured transactions to support such a vessel or entity;

(D) provides port or logistics services or facilities for technology upgrades or installation of equipment for, or retrofitting or tethering of, such a vessel for the purpose of evading sanctions;

(E) provides documentation, registration, or flagging services for such a vessel for the purpose of evading sanctions; or

(F) serves as a captain, principal officer, or senior leader of such a vessel or entity.

(b) **REPORT REQUIRED.**—Not later than 15 days after imposing sanctions with respect to a foreign person under subsection (a), the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that in-

cludes a detailed justification for the imposition of the sanctions.

(c) **SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.**—The sanctions described in this subsection are the following:

(1) **BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.**—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property of a foreign person described in subsection (a), if such property and interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) **INELIGIBILITY FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.**—

(A) **VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.**—An alien described in subsection (a) shall be—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) **CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.**—

(i) **IN GENERAL.**—The visa or other entry documentation of an alien described in subsection (a) shall be revoked, regardless of when such visa or other entry documentation is or was issued.

(ii) **IMMEDIATE EFFECT.**—A revocation under clause (i) shall—

(I) take effect immediately; and

(II) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the possession of the alien.

(d) **IMPLEMENTATION; PENALTIES.**—

(1) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The President may exercise all authorities provided under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) to carry out this section.

(2) **PENALTIES.**—A person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of this section or any regulation, license, or order issued to carry out this section shall be subject to the penalties set forth in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) to the same extent as a person that commits an unlawful act described in subsection (a) of that section.

(e) **EXCEPTIONS.**—

(1) **EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES.**—Sanctions under this section shall not apply with respect to the admission or parole of an alien into the United States if admitting or paroling the alien is necessary—

(A) to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations of the United States; or

(B) to carry out or assist authorized law enforcement activity in the United States.

(2) **EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.**—Sanctions under this section shall not apply to any activity subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.) or any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

(3) **EXCEPTION RELATING TO IMPORTATION OF GOODS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—A requirement to block and prohibit all transactions in all property and interests in property under this section

shall not include the authority or requirement to impose sanctions on the importation of goods.

(B) GOOD DEFINED.—In this paragraph, the term “good” means any article, natural or manmade substance, material, supply or manufactured product, including inspection and test equipment, and excluding technical data.

(f) NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS WAIVER.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under this section if, before issuing the waiver, the President submits to the appropriate congressional committees—

(1) a certification in writing that the issuance of the waiver is in the national security interests of the United States; and

(2) a report explaining the basis for the certification.

(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) ADMISSION; ADMITTED; ALIEN; ETC.—The terms “admission”, “admitted”, “alien”, and “lawfully admitted for permanent residence” have the meanings given those terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives.

(3) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term “foreign person” means an individual or entity that is not a United States person.

(4) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” means—

(A) any United States citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence to the United States;

(B) an entity organized under the laws of the United States or of any jurisdiction within the United States, including any foreign branch of such an entity; or

(C) any person in the United States.

#### SEC. 1287. SEMIANNUAL REPORT.

Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter through 2032, the President shall submit to Congress a report detailing—

(1) any incidents of interference or sabotage related to critical undersea infrastructure near Taiwan; and

(2) any actions taken in response to such incidents.

#### SEC. 1288. INTERAGENCY CONTINGENCY PLANNING FOR CROSS-STRAIT CRISIS.

(a) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States to be prepared for potential crises involving Taiwan, including an attempt by the People’s Republic of China (PRC) to change the status quo by force, through comprehensive interagency contingency planning that addresses the catastrophic risks such crises would pose to the national security of the United States.

(b) CROSS-STRAIT CONTINGENCY PLANNING GROUP.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall establish a Cross-Strait Contingency Planning Group—

(A) to be chaired by the National Security Council; and

(B) consisting of senior officials from the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the United States intelligence community, and such other Federal agencies as may be appropriate.

(2) FUNCTIONS.—The Cross-Strait Contingency Planning Group shall—

(A) conduct scenario-based planning exercises to prepare for potential crises involving Taiwan, including blockade or quarantine

scenarios, the seizure of an outlying island, military contingencies, economic coercion, cyber attacks, and hybrid threats;

(B) identify critical vulnerabilities in supply chains, financial systems, critical infrastructure, and security posture of the United States and allies and partners of the United States that would be affected by a crisis involving Taiwan;

(C) develop integrated contingency plans that coordinate diplomatic, military, economic, cyber, and homeland security responses across the Group;

(D) assess the adequacy of existing authorities, resources, and decision-making processes to execute such contingency plans;

(E) identify gaps in capabilities, authorities, or coordination mechanisms and recommend solutions;

(F) share risk assessments with allies and partners of the United States, as appropriate; and

(G) regularly test and refine contingency plans.

(3) REPORT REQUIRED.—Not later than 180 days after the establishment of the Cross-Strait Contingency Planning Group under paragraph (1), and annually thereafter for 10 years, the Cross-Strait Contingency Planning Group shall submit to Congress a classified report that includes—

(A) a description of contingency scenarios assessed and planning activities conducted by the Group;

(B) an assessment of the preparedness of the United States and allies and partners of the United States to respond to a crisis involving Taiwan, including identification of capability gaps and resource requirements;

(C) recommendations for legislative action, policy changes, or resource allocation to enhance such preparedness; and

(D) a description of exercises conducted and lessons learned by the Group.

**SA 5895.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. THUNE to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XII, add the following:

#### SEC. 1270A. COUNTERING TERRORISM BY HEZBOLLAH.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “No Hezbollah In Our Hemisphere Act”.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of State should pursue aggressive efforts against Iranian proxy networks in the Western Hemisphere, including by—

(1) demanding that governments put an end to the impunity enjoyed by designated individuals and entities or face the consequences described in this Act for their inaction;

(2) working with allies, potentially through international forums, such as the Financial Action Task Force, to greylist government entities that cooperate with Hezbollah;

(3) engaging governments in Latin America to ensure they have adequate legislative tools to investigate terrorist activities and combat the financing of terrorism; and

(4) persuading allies in the Latin America to designate Hezbollah as a terrorist organization, using Argentina’s model for designation as a blueprint.

(c) DEFINED TERM.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate;

(2) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate;

(3) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(4) the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives;

(5) the Committee on Financial Services of the House of Representatives; and

(6) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(d) DETERMINATION WITH RESPECT TO TERRORIST SANCTUARIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State, in coordination with the Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Attorney General, and the heads of other relevant Federal agencies, shall—

(A) conduct an assessment to determine whether any country, region, or jurisdiction in Latin America meets the definition of “terrorist sanctuary” under section 140(d)(4) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f(d)(4)); and

(B) submit the results of such assessment to the appropriate congressional committees.

(2) CONSIDERATIONS.—In making a determination pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary of State shall consider—

(A) the extent to which Hezbollah or any other foreign terrorist organization (as designated pursuant to section 219(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189(a))) operates freely, raises or transfers funds, recruits, or obtains safe haven within a given country, region, or jurisdiction;

(B) whether the host government has knowingly tolerated, or has failed to take action to address, terrorist activities after learning of their existence; and

(C) any other factors relevant to the definition of “terrorist sanctuary” under section 140(d)(4) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f(d)(4)).

(e) REVOCATION OF VISAS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may impose the sanctions described in paragraph (2) with respect to any foreign individual the President determines is a government official of any foreign state, subdivision, or municipality designated as a terrorist sanctuary under subsection (d) unless such official has taken significant, verifiable steps to stop such activity or the relevant jurisdiction no longer meets the definition of terrorist sanctuary under section 140(d)(4) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1988 and 1989 (22 U.S.C. 2656f(d)(4)).

(2) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—

(A) INELIGIBILITY FOR VISAS AND ADMISSIONS TO THE UNITED STATES.—A foreign individual described in paragraph (1) shall be—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The issuing consular officer or the Secretary of State (or a designee of the Secretary), in accordance with section 221(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1201(i)), shall revoke any visa or

other entry documentation issued to a foreign individual described in paragraph (1) regardless of when the visa or other entry documentation was issued.

(i) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under clause (i) shall—

(I) take effect immediately; and

(II) automatically cancel any other valid visa or entry documentation that is in the foreign individual's possession.

(iii) RULEMAKING.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this paragraph.

(3) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT OBJECTIVES AND AGREEMENT REGARDING THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS.—Sanctions under paragraph (2) shall not apply to a foreign person if admitting the person into the United States—

(A) would further important law enforcement objectives; or

(B) is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or other applicable international obligations of the United States.

(4) WAIVER.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The President may waive the application of sanctions under paragraph (2) with respect to—

(i) an individual, on a case-by-case basis for periods not to exceed 180 days, if the President determines that such individual's entry or continued presence in the United States is vital to the national security interests of the United States;

(ii) a jurisdiction, including a foreign country, or any subdivision of such country, that is designated as a terrorist sanctuary pursuant to subsection (d), for periods not to exceed 1 year, if the President determines that waiving the application of sanctions with respect to officials or other residents of such jurisdiction is in the national interest of the United States.

(B) REPORT.—Not later than 15 days before granting or renewing a waiver under subparagraph (A), the President shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that includes—

(i) the name of the individual or the specific jurisdiction subject to the waiver;

(ii) a detailed justification explaining how the waiver serves—

(I) the national security interests of the United States (for individuals); or

(II) the national interest of the United States (for jurisdictions); and

(iii) with respect to renewals—

(I) an assessment of the individual's or jurisdiction's activities during the most recent waiver period; and

(II) any conditions imposed to ensure compliance with United States interests.

(5) TERMINATION OF SANCTIONS.—The President may terminate the application of sanctions under this subsection with respect to a foreign individual if the President determines and reports to the appropriate congressional committees not later than 15 days before the termination of such sanctions that—

(A) the foreign individual is no longer engaged in the activity that was the basis for such sanctions or has taken significant verifiable steps toward stopping such activity;

(B) the President has received reliable assurances that such individual will not knowingly engage in any activity subject to sanctions under this section in the future; or

(C) the termination of such sanctions is in the national security interests of the United States.

(6) RULEMAKING.—The President shall issue such regulations, licenses, and orders as may be necessary to carry out this subsection.

(f) SUNSET.—Any sanctions imposed pursuant to this section shall terminate on the date that is 5 years after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SA 5896.** Mr. THUNE (for Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Ms. CORTEZ MASTO)) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by Mr. THUNE to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

**SEC. 1252. REPORT ON UNITED STATES CAPACITY TO COMPLY WITH THE TAIWAN RELATIONS ACT.**

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This section may be cited as the “Taiwan Relations Reinforcement Act”.

(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Armed Services of the Senate;

(B) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate;

(C) the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives; and

(D) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(2) GRAY ZONE TACTICS.—The term “gray zone tactics” means coercive actions, including military, paramilitary, cyber, space, economic, informational, and legal actions and other activities conducted below the threshold of armed conflict to alter the status quo without triggering a conventional military response.

(3) TAIWAN CONTINGENCY.—The term “Taiwan Contingency” means any attempt—

(A) to overthrow or dismantle the governing institutions in Taiwan;

(B) to occupy any territory controlled or administered by Taiwan;

(C) to violate the territorial integrity of Taiwan; or

(D) to take significant action against Taiwan, including—

(i) conducting a naval blockade of Taiwan;

(ii) seizing any outlying island of Taiwan;

or

(iii) perpetrating a significant physical or cyber attack on Taiwan that erodes the ability of the governing institutions in Taiwan to operate or provide essential services to the citizens of Taiwan.

(c) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for the following 5 years, the Secretary of War, in coordination with the Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command, shall submit a report to the appropriate congressional committees that assesses the capacity of the United States to fully implement sections 2 and 3 of the Taiwan Relations Act (22 U.S.C. 3301 and 3302), including—

(1) maintaining the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security or the social or economic system of the people on Taiwan;

(2) providing Taiwan with arms of a defensive character in such quantity as may be necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability; and

(3) preserving peace, security, and stability in the Western Pacific as matters of international concern.

(d) MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Each report required under subsection (c) shall include—

(A) a detailed assessment of whether the current and projected military posture, force structure, operational plans, and capabilities of the United States are sufficient to credibly deter—

(i) a large-scale amphibious invasion of Taiwan;

(ii) a maritime or air blockade of Taiwan; and

(iii) major missile or air strike campaigns against Taiwan;

(B) an assessment of the United States' capacity to credibly deter and resist forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system of the people on Taiwan, including sustained forms of coercion across air, maritime, cyber, space, economic, and information domains;

(C) an assessment of the United States' operational readiness and sustainability, including—

(i) readiness, posture, basing access and overflight, mobility, logistics resilience, prepositioned stocks, and munitions sufficiency in the Indo-Pacific region;

(ii) projected munitions expenditure rates and replenishment timelines under high-intensity conflict scenarios;

(iii) the ability of the defense industrial base to sustain operations in a protracted conflict of not less than 1 year; and

(iv) vulnerabilities to supply chain disruption, cyber attack, or anti-access/area denial strategies across domains;

(D) an assessment of the availability, reliability, and sufficiency of allied and partner contributions to deterrence and defense in a Taiwan contingency and to resist gray zone coercion; and

(E) an assessment of the capacity of the United States to comply with the Taiwan Relations Act (Public Law 96-8) in a scenario in which the United States is simultaneously responding to aggression initiated by the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, or a terrorist organization.

(2) CAPABILITY GAPS AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS.—For each assessment described in paragraph (1), the report shall—

(A) identify current capability gaps, shortfalls, and vulnerabilities;

(B) estimate capability gaps during the following 10 years based on current budget projections;

(C) specify budgetary, force posture, acquisition, industrial base, and legislative changes required to mitigate the gaps referred to in subparagraph (C); and

(D) include an estimated timeline and costs to achieve a level of capability sufficient to credibly deter and, if necessary, defeat aggression against Taiwan.

(e) FORM.—Each report required under subsection (c) shall be submitted in classified form, but may include an unclassified executive summary.

(f) BRIEFING.—Not later than 30 days after submission of each report pursuant to subsection (c), the Secretary of War shall provide a classified briefing to the appropriate congressional committees regarding the findings and recommendations contained in such report.

(g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

(1) to authorize the use of military force; or

(2) to alter or supersede any existing statutory requirement under the Taiwan Relations Act (22 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.).

**SA 5897.** Mr. HOEVNER proposed an amendment to the bill S. 675, to contribute funds and artifacts to the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library in Medora, North Dakota; as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Act”.

**SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

In this Act:

(1) **FOUNDATION.**—The term “Foundation” means the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation.

(2) **LIBRARY.**—The term “Library” means the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library to be located in Medora, North Dakota.

(3) **SECRETARY.**—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Interior.

**SEC. 3. FEDERAL CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD ESTABLISHMENT OF THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY.**

(a) **GRANTS.**—

(1) **AUTHORIZATION.**—To the extent provided in advance in appropriations Acts and subject to paragraphs (2) through (4), the Secretary may provide to the Foundation grants in an amount not to exceed a total of \$50,000,000 for the establishment of the Library—

(A) to preserve and make available to the public materials relating to the life of President Theodore Roosevelt; and

(B) to provide interpretive and educational services that communicate the meaning of the life of Theodore Roosevelt.

(2) **MATCHING REQUIREMENT.**—The Secretary may not provide a grant under paragraph (1) until the date on which the Foundation certifies to the Secretary that the Foundation has received an amount equal to not less than \$100,000,000 from funds for the Library—

(A) contributed by the State of North Dakota; or

(B) raised from non-Federal sources during the period beginning on the date on which the Foundation was established and ending on the date of the certification.

(3) **PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.**—Grant funds provided under this subsection may not be used for the maintenance or operation of the Library.

(4) **EFFECT.**—Nothing in this subsection requires an increase in the applicable sub-allocation made pursuant to section 302(b) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(b)).

(b) **FEDERAL ARTIFACTS AND OBJECTS RELATING TO THEODORE ROOSEVELT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary may enter into 1 or more agreements with the Foundation to provide for a loan to the Foundation from Federal agencies under the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary (including the National Park Service and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service) of historic, educational, artistic, natural, and other museum artifacts and objects, particularly artifacts and objects that are not on display to the public, without monetary consideration, subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be necessary for the preservation and exhibition of the artifacts and objects loaned to the Foundation.

(c) **NON-FEDERAL OPERATION.**—The Secretary or any other Federal entity shall have no involvement in the operation of the Library, except at the request of the non-Federal entity responsible for the operation of

the Library in accordance with applicable laws (including regulations).

**SA 5898.** Ms. DUCKWORTH submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

**SEC. . IRAN WAR ACCOUNTABILITY.**

(a) **PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—None of the funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act shall be used by the Department of Defense to fund military operations or activities against Iran until the date on which Congress authorizes the use of military force against Iran.

(2) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to prevent the United States from—

(A) defending against an attack on the United States or its personnel or facilities in other nations;

(B) collecting, analyzing, or sharing intelligence, including with the State of Israel and United States partners and allies, and international organizations as appropriate, related to defending against threats from Iran or its proxies;

(C) assisting partner countries who have been attacked by Iran since February 28, 2026, and other nations—

(i) in taking defensive measures to protect their territory from retaliatory attacks by Iran or its proxies; or

(ii) by providing defensive materiel support for such defensive measures; or

(D) providing assistance for the security, departure, and evacuation to United States citizens affected by the hostilities.

(b) **LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR TRAVEL EXPENSES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—None of the funds authorized to be appropriated by this Act or otherwise made available for fiscal year 2027 for operation and maintenance, Defense-wide, and available for the Office of the Secretary of Defense for travel expenses may be obligated or expended until the date on which the Secretary of Defense submits to the congressional defense committees a report on the manner in which military operations and activities against Iran since February 28, 2026, affect the military readiness of the United States Armed Forces.

(2) **ELEMENTS.**—The report referred to in paragraph (1) shall include, with respect to such operations and activities, the following:

(A) A detailed description of the impact of such operations and activities on the maintenance cycles for each affected platform or asset, including the date on which each such platform or asset is estimated to return to mission capable status, as compared to the original maintenance timeline.

(B) An accounting of munitions expenditures from such operations and activities, detailed by type of munition and the total available stock of such munition.

(C) Estimated timelines for replenishing expended munitions, by type of munition.

(D) A list of destroyed assets, platforms, and equipment (as compared to total stocks, disaggregated by mission capable rates) and associated costs.

(E) A list of damaged assets, platforms, and equipment (as compared to total stocks, disaggregated by mission capable rates) and associated costs of, and timelines for, repair.

(F) A list of damaged United States infrastructure and facilities, including a description of the source of damage, extent of damage, location, mission impacted by damage, and estimated cost of, and timeline for, repair.

(G) An accounting of wounded-in-action rates, associated costs of medical care, resulting disability rates, and an assessment of the manner in which such wounded-in-action rates impact unit readiness rates.

(H) A list of each unit that has experienced casualties, organized in descending order by number of casualties.

(3) **FORM.**—A report under this subsection shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

**SA 5899.** Mr. WARNER (for himself and Mr. ROUNDS) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title \_\_\_\_\_, insert the following:

**SEC. . ECONOMY OF THE FUTURE COMMISSION.**

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

(1) **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE.**—The term “artificial intelligence” has the meaning given the term in section 5002 of the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020 (15 U.S.C. 9401).

(2) **COMMISSION.**—The term “Commission” means the Economy of the Future Commission established under subsection (b).

(3) **CONGRESSIONAL LEADER.**—The term “congressional leader” means the majority leader of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the minority leader of the Senate, or the minority leader of the House of Representatives.

(4) **NAICS.**—The term “NAICS” means the North American Industry Classification System.

(b) **IN GENERAL.**—There is established in the legislative branch a commission to develop consensus legislative recommendations addressing economic changes caused by the adoption of artificial intelligence, to be known as the “Economy of the Future Commission”.

(c) **MEMBERSHIP.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Commission shall be composed of the following members:

(A) 12 members appointed by Congress in accordance with paragraph (2), of whom—

(i) the majority leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall each appoint 3 members; and

(ii) the minority leader of the Senate and the minority leader of the House of Representatives shall each appoint 3 members.

(B) Four persons appointed by the President, as nonvoting members.

(2) **CONGRESSIONAL APPOINTEES.**—Each congressional leader making appointments under paragraph (1)(A) shall—

(A) appoint 1 member who is serving as a Member of the house of Congress in which the congressional leader serves; and

(B) for any remaining appointments, appoint an individual who is not serving in Congress and who is nationally recognized for expertise, knowledge, or experience in—

(i) artificial intelligence technology;

(ii) education;

(iii) workforce retraining; or

(iv) taxation.

(3) APPOINTMENT.—Members of the Commission shall be appointed not later than 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(4) ETHICS.—A congressional leader who appoints members of the Commission may not appoint an individual as a member of the Commission if such individual possesses any personal or financial interest in the discharge of any of the duties of the Commission.

(d) CO-CHAIRS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall have 2 co-chairs, selected jointly by the congressional leaders from among the members of the Commission in accordance with paragraph (2).

(2) CO-CHAIR REQUIREMENTS.—One co-chair of the Commission shall be a member of the Democratic Party, and one co-chair shall be a member of the Republican Party. One co-chair of the Commission shall be a Member of the House of Representatives and one co-chair shall be a Senator.

(e) MEETINGS; QUORUM; VACANCIES.—

(1) INITIAL MEETING.—The Commission shall hold its initial meeting on or before the date that is 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) ADDITIONAL MEETINGS.—After its initial meeting, the Commission shall meet upon the call of the co-chairs of the Commission.

(3) QUORUM.—7 members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for purposes of conducting business, except that 2 members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for purposes of receiving testimony.

(4) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy in the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the same manner in which the original appointment was made.

(5) QUORUM WITH VACANCIES.—If vacancies in the Commission occur on any day after 45 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members of the Commission as of such day.

(f) ACTIONS OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall act by resolution agreed to by a majority of the members of the Commission voting and present.

(2) PANELS.—The Commission may establish panels composed of less than the full membership of the Commission for purposes of carrying out the duties of the Commission under this section. The actions of any such panel shall be subject to the review and control of the Commission. Any findings and determinations made by such a panel shall not be considered the findings and determinations of the Commission unless approved by the Commission.

(3) DELEGATION.—Any member, agent, or staff of the Commission may, if authorized by the co-chairs of the Commission, take any action which the Commission is authorized to take pursuant to this section.

(g) DUTIES.—The duties of the Commission are—

(1) in general, to develop consensus legislative recommendations addressing economic changes caused by the adoption of artificial intelligence;

(2) to evaluate the effectiveness of, and develop consensus legislative recommendations that address and respond to the economic changes caused by, the adoption of artificial intelligence, including the effectiveness and economic changes of that adoption for—

(A) government data, research, and measurement;

(B) workforce development programs;

(C) kindergarten through grade 12 public education, career and technical education, and higher education; and

(D) social safety net programs and worker support;

(3) to develop consensus legislative recommendations addressing—

(A) the development of standards and metrics to evaluate and address artificial intelligence adoption across the Federal Government, including standards and metrics to identify and address artificial intelligence-specific skill and training needs across the Federal workforce;

(B) the relative merits of open-source and open-weight models of artificial intelligence for suitability for small- and medium-sized businesses and the use of open-source and open-weight models to improve the efficiency of government operations;

(C) the potential for a national Federal artificial intelligence research investment strategy;

(D) public and private sector partnerships to increase research access by academic institutions and small businesses to private sector computing, models, data, and software resources related to artificial intelligence;

(E) developing and scaling foundational manufacturing technologies related to artificial intelligence through government programs and public-private partnerships such as the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Program established under section 25(b) of the National Institute of Standards and Technologies Act (15 U.S.C. 278k);

(F) supply chain and manufacturing challenges to developing emerging technologies that are projected to heavily utilize artificial intelligence, such as robotics;

(G) the need for public and private sector collaboration in developing cloud computing-based laboratories for furthering research into key technology focus areas, as defined in section 10387(c) of the Research and Development, Competition, and Innovation Act (42 U.S.C. 19107(c)), utilizing artificial intelligence;

(H) changes to transportation safety policies and regulations caused by the adoption of artificial intelligence in land-, air-, and sea-based autonomous vehicles;

(I) energy generation, storage, and transmission demands caused by the development of the artificial intelligence industry and the construction and operation of domestic data centers; and

(J) the use of artificial intelligence-enabled robotics in government (other than in the Department of Defense) and industry; and

(4) to prepare the reports required under subsection (k).

(h) POWERS OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission or, on the authorization of the Commission, any subcommittee or member of, the Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this section—

(A) hold such hearings and sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, receive such evidence, and administer such oaths; and

(B) require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, and documents, as the Commission or such designated subcommittee or designated member considers necessary.

(2) SUBPOENAS.—Subpoenas may be issued under paragraph (1)(B) under the signature of the co-chairs of the Commission, and may be served by any person designated by such co-chairs.

(3) FAILURE TO COMPLY.—The provisions of sections 102 through 104 of the Revised Statutes (2 U.S.C. 192 through 194) shall apply in the case of any failure of a witness to comply with any subpoena or to testify when summoned under authority of this section.

(4) CONTRACTING.—The Commission may, to such extent and in such amounts as are pro-

vided in advance in appropriation Acts, enter into contracts to enable the Commission to discharge its duties under this section.

(5) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission may secure directly from any executive department, agency, bureau, board, commission, office, independent establishment, or instrumentality of the Government information, suggestions, estimates, and statistics for the purposes of this section.

(B) RESPONSE.—Each such department, agency, bureau, board, commission, office, establishment, or instrumentality shall, to the extent authorized by law, furnish such information, suggestions, estimates, and statistics directly to the Commission, upon request of the co-chairs of the Commission.

(C) CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.—The Commission shall handle and protect all classified information provided to it under this section in accordance with applicable statutes and regulations.

(6) ASSISTANCE FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—Federal departments and agencies may provide the Commission such services, funds, facilities, staff, and other support as such departments and agencies consider advisable and as may be authorized by law.

(7) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Commission may use the United States postal services in the same manner and under the same conditions as the departments and agencies of the United States.—

(8) GIFTS.—

(A) NO GIFTS FOR SERVICE.—No member or staff of the Commission may receive a gift or benefit by reason of the service of such member or staff to the Commission.

(B) AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT GIFTS.—The Commission may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property (including goods) from non-Federal entities for the purposes of aiding and facilitating the work of the Commission. The authority in this subparagraph does not extend to gifts of money.

(i) STAFF OF COMMISSION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The co-chairs of the Commission, in accordance with rules agreed upon by the Commission, shall appoint and fix the compensation of a staff director and such other personnel as may be necessary to enable the Commission to carry out its duties, without regard to the provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates, except that no rate of pay fixed under this subsection may exceed the equivalent of that payable to a person occupying a position at level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(2) EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.—The co-chairs of the Commission may procure the services of experts and consultants in accordance with section 3109 of title 5, United States Code, as if the Commission were an agency described in that section, at rates for individuals that do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of such title.

(3) DETAILEES.—Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement from the Commission, and such detailee shall retain the rights, status, and privileges of his or her regular employment without interruption.

(j) COMPENSATION AND TRAVEL EXPENSES.—

(1) COMPENSATION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), each member of the Commission may be compensated at not to exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay in effect for a position at level IV

of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day during which that member is engaged in the actual performance of the duties of the Commission under this section.

(B) EXCLUSION.—Members of the Commission who are officers or employees of the United States or Members of Congress shall receive no additional pay by reason of their service on the Commission.

(2) TRAVEL EXPENSES.—While away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission, members of the Commission may be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, in the same manner as persons employed intermittently in the Government service are allowed expenses under section 5703 of title 5, United States Code.

(k) REPORTS.—

(1) INTERIM REPORT.—By not later than 7 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall issue an interim report, to be disseminated to the public, including—

(A)(i) the initial estimates of changes in employment due to the adoption of artificial intelligence for 5 years and 10 years after the date of enactment of this Act, by 6-digit NAICS code; and

(ii) the Commission's level of confidence in such estimates;

(B)(i) Federal revenue estimates for tax years beginning 5 and 10 years after the enactment of this Act; and

(ii) commentary by the Commission on the likelihood that the adoption of artificial intelligence will increase or decrease revenue during each time period described in clause (i); and

(C) a description of high-quality, free resources that the public can access to learn more about artificial intelligence and the effects that its wide adoption may have on the global economy.

(2) FINAL REPORT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—By not later than 13 months after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission shall prepare and submit a final report regarding the impact of the adoption of artificial intelligence that includes legislative recommendations on artificial intelligence education, reskilling of employees needed due to the adoption of artificial intelligence, unemployment insurance, and taxation policy, and on maintaining global competitiveness in key industries including technology and manufacturing.

(B) SUBMISSION.—The report required under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted to Congress and to the Secretary of Treasury, Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Labor, and Secretary of Education.

(C) ASSESSMENTS OF FINAL REPORT.—By not later than 60 days after the date on which the final report is submitted under subparagraph (B), the Secretaries of Treasury, Commerce, Labor, and Education shall individually submit an assessment of the final report to Congress.

(1) TERMINATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission, and all the authorities of this section, shall terminate on the last day of the 120-day period beginning on the date on which the final report described in subsection (k)(2) is submitted to Congress.

(2) CLOSING ACTIVITIES.—The Commission may use the 120-day period immediately preceding termination for the purposes of concluding its activities, including providing testimony to Congress concerning the final report described in subsection (k)(2) and disseminating the report.

(m) FUNDING.—There is appropriated, out of any amounts in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, \$5,250,000 to carry out this section, to remain available until the date

on which the Commission terminates under subsection (l)(1).

**SA 5900.** Mrs. SHAHEEN submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by her to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place in title XI, insert the following:

**SEC. \_\_\_\_ SPECIAL RULES FOR CERTAIN CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RECEIVING COMPENSATION FOR ANOMALOUS HEALTH INCIDENTS.**

(a) COVERED EMPLOYEE DEFINED.—In this section, the term “covered employee” means any current or former civilian officer or employee of the Department of Defense who has been determined eligible for, and has received, a lump-sum payment under the implementation by the Department of Defense of section 901(i) of title IX of division J of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (22 U.S.C. 2680b(i)).

(b) ADJUSTMENT OF COMPENSATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense may increase the amount of monthly compensation paid to a covered employee under section 8105 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) AMOUNT.—In lieu of the percentage specified in section 8105(a) of title 5, United States Code, the amount of compensation described in paragraph (1) shall be the amount necessary to ensure that the total monthly compensation payable to the covered employee equals 75 percent of the maximum rate of basic pay plus the applicable locality-based comparability payment under section 5304 of such title for GS-15, step 10, determined by reference to the Washington, District of Columbia locality pay area, as determined under section 5332 of such title.

(3) ADMINISTRATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that an increase in compensation described in paragraph (1) is applied without the need for additional application or adjudication by the covered employee.

(c) GUIDELINES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—If the Secretary decides to exercise the authority provided by subsection (b), the Secretary shall issue guidelines to increase compensation as described in such subsection not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(2) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall develop the guidelines described in paragraph (1) in coordination with the cross-functional team established under section 910 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022 (10 U.S.C. 111 note; Public Law 117-81).

(d) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—

(1) OTHER INDIVIDUALS.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to alter the application of section 8105 of title 5, United States Code, with respect to any individual other than a covered employee.

(2) DURATION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to require payment of compensation under this section after the period during which the disability of the covered employee relating to a qualifying injury of the brain is total under section 8105 of title 5, United States Code.

(3) MEDICAL CARE.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to expand, limit, or otherwise affect the scope of medical care, treatment, or related services provided under any other provision of law, including the HA-

VANA Act of 2021 (Public Law 117-46) and the amendments made by that Act.

(e) SUNSET.—This section shall cease to be effective on the date that is one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SA 5901.** Mr. McCORMICK (for himself and Mr. FETTERMAN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle D of title XII, add the following:

**SEC. 1252. STRATEGY FOR DEPLOYMENT OF UNMANNED AND AUTONOMOUS SYSTEMS IN INDO-PACIFIC REGION AND WESTERN HEMISPHERE.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Defense, in coordination with the officials specified in subsection (b), shall develop a strategy for the deployment, employment, integration, sustainment, exportability, and scaling of unmanned and autonomous systems in the Indo-Pacific region and the Western Hemisphere.

(b) SPECIFIED OFFICIALS.—The officials specified in this subsection are the following:

(1) The Commander of the United States Indo-Pacific Command.

(2) The Commander of the United States Southern Command.

(3) The Commander of the United States Northern Command.

(4) The Director of the Defense Autonomous Warfare Group (or successor organization).

(5) The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

(6) The Secretaries of the military departments.

(7) Any other United States Government official the Secretary of Defense considers appropriate.

(c) ELEMENTS.—The strategy required by subsection (a) shall include the following:

(1) An assessment of current capability gaps and operational requirements with respect to the deployment of unmanned autonomous systems within the areas of responsibility of the United States Indo-Pacific Command, the United States Southern Command, and the United States Northern Command, including with respect to—

(A) persistent maritime, air, littoral, and undersea domain awareness;

(B) undersea surveillance and anti-submarine warfare;

(C) long-range strike and attributable systems;

(D) integration of artificial intelligence and decoy operations;

(E) counter-unmanned systems operations;

(F) logistics and communications relay;

(G) electronic warfare and signals intelligence;

(H) mine detect and defeat; and

(I) Department of Defense missions to terrorism in the Western Hemisphere, including such missions in support of maritime interdiction and detection-and-monitoring operations.

(2) An assessment of the scope of unmanned and autonomous systems that may be deployed across, air, surface, and subsurface domains in the Indo-Pacific region and the Western Hemisphere, including—

(A) an identification of the scope of systems necessary to fulfill the operational requirements with respect to the elements described in each of subparagraphs (A) through (I) of paragraph (1) for—

- (i) unmanned aircraft systems;
- (ii) unmanned surface vessels;
- (iii) undersea vehicles, including remotely operated and autonomous such vehicles; and
- (iv) unmanned and autonomous systems platform attributes;

(B) the current number of systems available for such deployment, including remotely operated and autonomous vehicles necessary to fulfill the operational requirements described in subparagraphs (A) through (I) of paragraph (1); and

(C) platform attributes necessary to fulfill the operational requirements described in subparagraphs (A) through (I) of paragraph (1), including—

- (i) an evaluation of capability for artificial intelligence integration and autonomy-enabled software;
- (ii) operational range, time-on-station, payload capacity, autonomy levels, and survivability;
- (iii) associated launch and recovery systems, control stations, communications links, sensors, payloads, and modular mission packages, and other operationally relevant performance parameters;
- (iv) kinetic and non-kinetic mission options; and
- (v) an evaluation of the storage, maintenance, training, and personnel readiness associated with each system identified.

(3) An identification of prospective basing, staging, and forward deployment locations for unmanned and autonomous systems within the areas of responsibility of the United States Indo-Pacific Command, the United States Southern Command, and the United States Northern Command, including an assessment of—

(A) existing United States military installations and their capacity to support unmanned systems operations and long-term storage of such systems;

(B) partner country facilities and agreements necessary to enable forward deployment; and

(C) at-sea and at-sea deployment concepts.

(4) An evaluation of the maturity and demonstrated operational suitability of endurance-enabling propulsion technologies, including hybrid-electric propulsion, with attention to efficiency, reliability, acoustic performance, and sustainment considerations.

(5) A plan for cross-domain integration of unmanned and autonomous systems into the broader joint force, including enhancement of conventional weapon systems, manned platforms, artificial intelligence systems, and command-and-control networks.

(6) A summary of ongoing experimentation, prototyping, and operational demonstrations, including lessons learned from use by the United States Indo-Pacific Command, the United States Central Command, and the United States Special Operations Command.

(7) A plan for co-design, co-development, co-production, and interoperability of unmanned systems with allies and partners, with particular emphasis on—

(A) Australia, Israel, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, and Ukraine; and

(B) partners under the Advanced Capabilities pillar of the AUKUS partnership.

(8) An assessment of adversary unmanned systems capabilities and counter-unmanned systems threats, and recommendations for measures to ensure survivability and mission effectiveness of United States and allied unmanned systems.

(9) A resource and procurement plan identifying near-term, mid-term, and long-term investments in unmanned and autonomous programs required to execute such strategy, including an identification of programs of record, rapid acquisition pathways, scalability and manufacturability, supply-chain vulnerabilities, and commercial off-the-shelf options.

(10) A plan for addressing supply chain dependencies and vulnerabilities for UAS, USV, and UUV systems, consistent with the requirements of the American Security Drone Act of 2023 (Public Law 118-31; 137 Stat. 691; 41 U.S.C. note prec. 3901), as applicable, to ensure that United States military unmanned systems are not dependent on components manufactured by entities subject to the influence or control of a covered foreign entity.

(11) Metrics and milestones for measuring the implementation and effectiveness of the strategy.

(d) SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees (as defined in section 101 of title 10, United States Code) the strategy developed under subsection (a).

(e) BRIEFING.—Not later than 1 year after the date on which the strategy required by subsection (a) is submitted, and annually thereafter through 2030, the Secretary of Defense shall provide the congressional defense committees with a briefing on—

(1) the status of implementation of the strategy;

(2) any changes in adversary unmanned systems capabilities or operational behavior that affect the strategy;

(3) progress on allied and partner co-development and interoperability initiatives;

(4) procurements, deployments, and exercises conducted in furtherance of the strategy; and

(5) any recommended updates or modifications to the strategy.

(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

(1) COVERED FOREIGN ENTITY.—The term “covered foreign entity” has the meaning given that term in section 1822 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (Public Law 118-31; 10 U.S.C. 4661 note).

(2) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM; UAS.—The terms “unmanned aircraft system” and “UAS” mean an unmanned aircraft and associated elements, including communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft, in accordance with section 44801 of title 49, United States Code.

(3) UNMANNED UNDERSEA VEHICLE; UUV.—The terms “unmanned undersea vehicle” and “UUV” means an unmanned, self-propelled vehicle that operates below the surface of the water, including remotely operated vehicles and autonomous undersea vehicles.

(4) UNMANNED SURFACE VEHICLE; USV.—The terms “unmanned surface vehicle” and “USV” means an unmanned, self-propelled vehicle that operates at the surface of the water, including remotely operated vehicles and autonomous surface

**SA 5902.** Mr. McCORMICK (for himself and Ms. ROSEN) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 4784, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2027 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of title XII, add the following:

**Subtitle F—Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act of 2026**

**SEC. 1281. SHORT TITLE.**

This subtitle may be cited as the “Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act of 2026”.

**SEC. 1282. FINDINGS; STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) For nearly five decades, the people of Iran have endured brutal repression under the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, a regime that denies basic human rights, silences dissidents, and responds to peaceful protest with violence.

(2) The people of Iran have repeatedly and courageously taken to the streets to demand economic opportunity, human rights, dignity, and freedom.

(3) During the 2026 protests, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran responded with brutality by reportedly killing tens of thousands of people and wounding thousands more, arresting tens of thousands, and restricting internet access and telephone lines.

(4) The people of Iran are protesting the Iranian regime’s economic mismanagement, corruption, internal suppression, and unjust executions.

(5) Free expression, open information, and uncensored communication are fundamental human rights and critical to the survival of the Iranian protestors.

(6) Thanks in part to United States-funded efforts to support human rights and open internet access, the Iranian people are consistently found to be one of the most pro-American populations in the Middle East.

(7) The inspiring 2022 Women, Life, Freedom protests demanded an end to the Islamic Republic and its violence, particularly against Iranian women and ethnic minorities.

(8) The barbaric so-called “morality police” and other arms of state suppression have a lengthy history of repressing the Iranian people’s fundamental freedoms.

(9) The Iranian regime has engaged in systematic efforts to intimidate, harass, detain, and harm political dissidents, activists, and journalists both within Iran and beyond its borders.

(10) The people of Iran deserve the right to dignity, democracy, and self-determination and to be free from the brutality of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

(b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It shall be the policy of the United States—

(1) to recognize the Iranian people’s right to self-determination;

(2) to facilitate the immediate expansion of open, uncensored internet access and civilian lines of communication for the people of Iran to communicate domestically and with the outside world;

(3) to support the internationally recognized human rights of Iranians and programs to assist Iranian civil society, including in their credible documentation, reporting, and accountability efforts of abuses in Iran;

(4) to fully enforce sanctions against regime violators of internationally recognized human rights and their family members; and

(5) to work in coordination with its allies and partners to deter the regime’s violence against the Iranian people.

**SEC. 1283. IMPROVED COORDINATION OF EFFORTS TO PROMOTE INTERNET FREEDOM IN IRAN.**

(a) DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE.—The Secretary of State is authorized to be the Federal official with the primary responsibility for—

(1) promoting widespread internet freedom in Iran and expanding open access to

independent and impartial information for Iranian citizens;

(2) coordinating all efforts carried out by Federal departments and agencies that relate the objectives outlined in paragraph (1); and

(3) serving as the principal official responsible for updating and carrying out the strategy required under section 5124(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a).

(b) UPDATES TO COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO PROMOTE INTERNET FREEDOM AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN IRAN.—

(1) UPDATES.—Section 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(2), by striking subparagraphs (A) through (G) and inserting the following new subparagraphs:

“(A) An evaluation of the use of virtual private networks, centralized networks, peer-to-peer technologies, and other emerging circumvention tools by civil society and internationally recognized human rights activists in Iran and strategies for increasing open access to such networks and technologies, prioritizing tools with demonstrated effectiveness, scalability, and acceptable user security risks in the Iran context.

“(B) An assessment of United States Government efforts to cultivate and expand viable alternatives to virtual private networks, peer to peer technology, and other emerging circumvention tools.

“(C) A breakdown of any limitations or restrictions facing the development or deployment of United States Government sponsored virtual private networks, peer to peer technology, or other emerging circumvention tools to support internet freedom in Iran.

“(D) An assessment of the ability of the Government of Iran to cut off all access to the global internet in Iran, including the primary tools and technology through which they may be able to do so.”;

(B) by redesignating subsection (b) as subsection (c); and

(C) by inserting after subsection (a) the following new subsection:

“(b) UPDATES.—The Secretary of State and the heads of other Federal departments and agencies as appropriate, shall review the strategy under subsection (a) on an ongoing basis and update the strategy as appropriate, taking into account the results of such review.”.

(2) SUBMISSION OF FIRST UPDATES.—

(A) SUBMISSION.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall—

(i) review and update the strategy pursuant to section 5124(a) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a), as amended by paragraph (1); and

(ii) submit such updated strategy to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives.

(B) FORM.—The strategy under subparagraph (A) shall be submitted in an unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(3) ADDITIONAL UPDATE.—Section 414 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8754) is amended—

(A) by redesignating paragraphs (11) and (12) as paragraphs (12) and (13), respectively; and

(B) by inserting after paragraph (10) the following new paragraph:

“(11) work with the relevant Federal departments and agencies to ensure enforcement of sanctions does not impede compa-

nies providing to Iranian civilians the technology and other tools necessary to access the open internet.”.

**SEC. 1284. INTERNET FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP CIRCUMVENTION.**

(a) INTERNET FREEDOM REPORT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of the Act, the Secretary of State, in consultation with relevant Federal departments and agencies, shall prepare and submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives a report that updates and supplements the report required under section 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (Public Law 118–159).

(2) ADDITIONAL MATTERS TO BE INCLUDED.—Updates to the strategy required in section 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a) shall also include the following:

(A) An assessment of the feasibility of using direct-to-cell wireless communications technologies to expand internet access for the people of Iran, including technical, regulatory, and security considerations.

(B) An analysis of how drone-based platforms, signal-jamming technologies, and related countermeasures could impact the feasibility, security, economics, and resilience of such direct-to-cell wireless communications.

(C) A survey of terrestrial and non-terrestrial telecommunications service providers currently active in Iran, including—

(i) whether such providers are state-owned or state-controlled;

(ii) the extent of foreign participation or investment in such providers;

(iii) the implications of such ownership and control for communications freedom and censorship; and

(iv) any other relevant information to assess the opportunities and risks associated with terrestrial and non-terrestrial communications technologies in Iran.

(3) FORM.—The report required by paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(b) EXTENSION AND INCREASE OF AUTHORIZATION FOR IRAN INTERNET FREEDOM GRANT PROGRAM.—Section 5124(c)(5)(A) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a(c)(5)(A)), as redesignated by section 1283(b)(1)(B), is amended by striking “each of fiscal years 2025 and 2026” and inserting “each fiscal year through fiscal year 2030”.

(c) DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNET ACCESS TECHNOLOGIES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Department of State, in coordination with other relevant Federal departments and agencies, is authorized to utilize existing interagency coordination mechanisms to the maximum extent practicable, to support the development of low-cost, easily scalable, and rapidly deployable technologies to counter internet shutdowns or limitations on network access in Iran to enable populations to overcome such restrictions.

(2) OBJECTIVES.—In carrying out the responsibilities under subsection (a), the Department should prioritize the following objectives:

(A) Identifying and supporting the development of technologies capable of overcoming internet blackouts and network disruptions imposed by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and facilitating open, uncensored internet and network access, which could include, among other things—

(i) mesh networking solutions; and

(ii) portable and deployable communication systems.

(B) Expanding access to and the effectiveness virtual private networks (commonly known as “VPNs”), including by—

(i) collaborating with industry, academia, and relevant stakeholders to accelerate the research, development, and deployment of such technologies;

(ii) conducting pilot programs and field experiments to test the effectiveness and scalability of developed solutions in real-world settings; and

(iii) providing technical assistance and resources to partner organizations, governments, and nongovernmental entities engaged in efforts to expand uncensored internet access.

(C) Identifying and evaluating off-the-shelf technologies that could be rapidly procured and deployed to address internet access challenges in targeted regions.

(D) Ensuring that any technology supported under this subsection is assessed for user safety, detectability by hostile governments, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, data protection, supply-chain risks, sanctions and export-control compliance, and risk of diversion to the Government of Iran, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or sanctioned persons or entities.

(3) COLLABORATION.—The Department should collaborate with relevant Federal agencies to leverage expertise in acquisition processes and practices related to carrying out the objectives under paragraph (2) with the aim of—

(A) integrating best practices in acquisition into the research, development, and deployment processes of technologies to facilitate open, uncensored internet access;

(B) providing training and educational opportunities on acquisition principles, regulations, and procedures, with a focus on technology development for countering censorship and related restrictions;

(C) fostering dialogue and exchange of knowledge between acquisition professionals and innovation specialists to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of acquisition related to internet access technologies;

(D) collaborating on the development of acquisition strategies that prioritize the rapid acquisition and deployment of technologies aimed at countering censorship and restrictions on internet access; and

(E) ensuring that strategies aimed at the rapid acquisition and deployment of such technologies account for the specific challenges presented by the country context, including logistical barriers to large-scale technology distribution and security risks to civilians using the technologies.

(4) REPORTING.—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an annual report detailing the progress, challenges, and outcomes of the efforts undertaken pursuant to this section.

(5) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(B) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

**SEC. 1285. STRATEGY ON HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANCE.**

(a) STRATEGY REQUIRED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a strategy to expand and enhance United States programs to support the protection

and promotion of internationally recognized human rights in Iran.

(2) ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY.—The strategy required under subsection (a) shall include—

(A) United States Government efforts to support internationally recognized human rights and democratic civil society, including efforts to assist in the credible documentation of abuses of internationally recognized human rights;

(B) specific plans and initiatives to ensure the Iranian people have reliable access to accurate, uncensored, and unbiased news coverage, including through digital circumvention tools, shortwave radio, and emerging technologies;

(C) programs to support independent Iranian journalists, media outlets, and citizen journalists, including grants for equipment, training, secure communication platforms, and capacity-building for Persian and other local language media;

(D) programs to support and train Iranian civil society;

(E) coordination mechanisms with international partners, the private sector, and diaspora communities to amplify credible independent media;

(F) annual performance metrics and benchmarks for audience reach, content impact, and program outcomes; and

(G) a multi-year budget and resource requirements plan to implement the strategy.

(3) FORM.—The strategy required in subsection (a) shall be transmitted in an unclassified form and may contain a classified annex.

(b) GAO REPORT ON NEAR EAST REGIONAL DEMOCRACY (NERD) EXPENDITURES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report examining Federal expenditures under the Near East Regional Democracy (NERD) account over fiscal years 2024 and 2025.

(2) MATTERS INCLUDED.—The report shall include—

(A) a detailed accounting of all NERD funds obligated and expended for Iran-related programs, including broadcasting, media support, civil society assistance, and human rights initiatives;

(B) an assessment of the processes used for grant allocation, contractor oversight, vetting of recipients, and measuring program outcomes;

(C) an evaluation of the effectiveness of such programs in advancing United States policy objectives, including expanding information access and supporting independent media within Iran; and

(D) recommendations for improving transparency, accountability, and impact measurement.

(3) PROTECTION OF SENSITIVE INFORMATION.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall ensure that the report required under this subsection does not publicly disclose personally identifiable information, implementing-partner identities, sub-grantee identities, operational details, cybersecurity methods, secure communications channels, or other information that the Secretary of State determines could endanger individuals, compromise ongoing programs, or undermine the national security interests of the United States. Such information may be provided in a classified annex or otherwise protected consistent with applicable law.

(c) FORM.—The strategy and the GAO report required under this section shall each be submitted in unclassified form, but may include a classified annex.

(d) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(1) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the Committee on Armed Services, the Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate; and

(2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Armed Services, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, and the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives.

**SEC. 1286. CYBERSECURITY CAPACITY FOR CIVIL SOCIETY IN IRAN.**

(a) TRAINING AND TOOLS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State should establish programs—

(1) to deliver remote or in-person cybersecurity training to journalists, defenders of internationally recognized human rights, and civil-society actors in Iran;

(2) to furnish vetted open-source or commercially available digital-safety tools, including prioritizing VPN services and other software-based solutions that minimize physical detection risks, including end-to-end encrypted messaging applications; and

(3) to provide multilingual educational materials that warn Iranian users about regime-controlled applications and phishing campaigns.

(b) REPORTING AND EVALUATION.—

(1) METRICS.—The Secretary of State shall track and make available to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, in classified form or otherwise protected form as appropriate, aggregate metrics on the number of trainees, incident-response cases, and unique users of supported digital safety tools. Such metrics shall be aggregated and reported biannually in a manner that protects user safety, operational security, implementing partners and the integrity of supported tools and platforms.

(2) INDEPENDENT EVALUATION.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an evaluation of the effectiveness of the program carried out under this section.

(c) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—Nothing in this section may be construed to supersede or limit existing authority under section 404 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8754) or any other provision of law related to internet freedom programming in Iran.

(d) COORDINATION WITH EXISTING PROGRAMS.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary of State shall coordinate with and build upon existing Iran internet freedom programs, including those established under section 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a), to avoid duplication and maximize effectiveness.

**SEC. 1287. RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**

Nothing in this subtitle may be construed as authorizing the use of military force.

**SEC. 1288. SANCTIONS AND EXPORT CONTROL SAVINGS CLAUSE.**

Nothing in this subtitle may be construed to authorize any transaction prohibited by the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations, the Export Control Reform Act of 2018, the Export Administration Regulations, or any other applicable sanctions or export-control authority, except pursuant to a general or specific license, reg-

ulatory authorization or other authorization issued by the relevant agency.

**SEC. 1289. DERIVATION OF FUNDS.**

Amounts made available to carry out this subtitle shall be derived from amounts authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available to the Department of State.

#### SOCIAL MEDIA HARMS VICTIM REMEMBRANCE DAY

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 761.

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

The senior legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 761) designating June 23, 2026, as “Social Media Harms Victim Remembrance Day”.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 761) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of June 9, 2026, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

#### COMMEMORATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANTISEMITIC ATTACK ON PARTICIPANTS IN THE RUN FOR THEIR LIVES WALK IN BOULDER, COLORADO, ON JUNE 1, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 768.

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

The senior legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 768) commemorating the anniversary of the antisemitic attack on participants in the Run for Their Lives walk in Boulder, Colorado, on June 1, 2025.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 768) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of June 11, 2026, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)