

Vote YES on the Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act

Sending Office: Committee on Natural Resources

Support the Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act

Dear Colleague:

Wildfires and drought – exacerbated by the climate crisis – are wreaking havoc on much of the western United States, affecting millions of Americans. This week, the House is expected to consider the Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act, which includes key investments and response measures to address wildfire, drought, and related issues, including disaster assistance programs and protective measures for environmental justice communities disproportionately harmed by drought, wildfire, and other climate events.

Taken together, this bill builds on the investments made in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help communities being devastated by fire and drought.

Climate change, a century of fire suppression, and a growing number of people living and recreating within the wildland urban interface have all contributed to the reality of wildfires as a year-round threat. The Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act includes policies and resources to support a 10-Year Strategy to meaningfully address wildfire risk and provide for the protection and conservation of our national forests and public land, including support for our federal wildland firefighters and land managers.

Climate change is also making droughts more severe and persistent, with parts of the western United States experiencing their driest conditions in over 1,200 years. The Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act delivers drought relief for communities in several ways, including investments in new drought-proof water supply projects, like water recycling and modern desalination; projects to deliver reliable water across Indian Country; support for modern water data, tools, research, and technologies to enhance effective water management; ecosystem protection and restoration projects to sustain our environment during drought; and resources to preserve Colorado River water supplies for 40 million people.

Worsening wildfire and drought conditions are also exacerbating environmental injustices for low-income communities, Indigenous communities, and communities of color. The Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act includes provisions to protect and advance environmental justice for these communities. The environmental justice provisions included in this bill are the same as those the House approved in the 116th Congress as part of H.R. 4447.

The Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act provides strategic and targeted investments at the landscape scale to help improve wildfire and drought conditions for communities, provide defensible space for firefighter response, and protect communities from catastrophic wildfires.

I encourage you to vote YES on the Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act.

Please contact Matthew Muirragui (matthew.muirragui@mail.house.gov) and Chris Rackens (chris.rackens@mail.house.gov) in my office with any questions.

Sincerely,

Raúl M. Grijalva

Chair, Committee on House Natural Resources