

**First Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

PREAMENDED

LLS NO. R15-0129.01 Ashley Zimmerman x2291

SJR15-004

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Roberts,

HOUSE SPONSORSHIP

Hamner,

Senate Committees

Agriculture, Natural Resources, & Energy

House Committees

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 15-004

101 **CONCERNING REQUESTS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REGARDING**
102 **SUPPORT FOR WILDLAND FIRE SUPPRESSION.**

1 WHEREAS, The threat of wildfire is a matter of serious concern
2 to Colorado residents, especially to those living in the wildland-urban
3 interface; and

4 WHEREAS, In the last decade, the average number of acres
5 burned by wildfires in Colorado has more than tripled; and

6 WHEREAS, Since 1994, Colorado has experienced some of its
7 worst fires on record, including:

8 ! The South Canyon Fire, also referred to as the Storm King
9 Fire, in 1994, which burned 2,115 acres and killed 14

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 firefighters;

2 ! The Hayman Fire, in 2002, which burned 137,760 acres,
3 killed 5 firefighters, destroyed 600 total structures, and
4 remains the largest wildfire in Colorado by area;

5 ! The Missionary Ridge Fire, in 2002, which burned 71,739
6 acres, killed one firefighter, and destroyed 56 homes;

7 ! The Fourmile Canyon Fire, in 2010, which burned 6,181
8 acres and destroyed at least 162 homes;

9 ! The High Park Fire, in 2012, which burned 87,284 acres,
10 killed one person, and destroyed at least 248 homes;

11 ! The Waldo Canyon Fire, in 2012, which burned 18,247
12 acres, killed 2 people, and destroyed 346 homes;

13 ! The Black Forest Fire, in 2013, which burned 14,280 acres,
14 killed 2 people, and destroyed 511 homes;

15 ! The Royal Gorge Fire, in 2013, which burned 3,800 acres
16 and caused significant damage to Royal Gorge Park and the
17 Royal Gorge Bridge; and

18 ! The West Fork Fire Complex, in 2013, composed of 3
19 subsidiary fires that merged together, which burned
20 110,405 acres and forced the evacuation of the entire town
21 of South Fork; and

22 WHEREAS, According to the Congressional Research Service, as
23 of 2010, 36.2% of land in Colorado was federal land managed by the
24 Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, the Fish and Wildlife
25 Service, or the National Park Service; and

26 WHEREAS, Nearly 68% of Colorado's forests are federally
27 owned, 47% of which are owned by the United States Forest Service; and

28 WHEREAS, Other states, including California, Arizona, Oregon,
29 and Idaho, have experienced record wildfires in the last few years; and

30 WHEREAS, California has had 12 record-setting fires since 2000,

1 each one totaling over 105,000 acres burned; and

2

3 WHEREAS, While wildfire suppression is important, we must
4 learn from the past and not rely solely on suppression, instead also
5 focusing attention on mitigation and land management support; and

6 WHEREAS, Colorado recognizes the value of fire for forest health
7 and the need to use fire, as well as grazing, as a selective tool for
8 maintaining healthy forests in the state; and

9 WHEREAS, The increase in wildfires across the western United
10 States has led to an increase in federal agency budgets for wildfire
11 suppression, decreasing available moneys for mitigation and land
12 management support; now, therefore,

13 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventieth General Assembly*
14 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

15 That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, ask the
16 federal government to:

17 (1) Create a separate line item in the federal budget for
18 catastrophic wildfires; and

19 (2) Purchase and deploy additional aerial firefighting equipment
20 to assist in fighting wildfires across the country.

21 *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
22 to Ken Watkins, President of Colorado State Fire Chiefs; Paul Cooke,
23 Director of the Division of Fire Prevention and Control in the Department
24 of Public Safety; Mike Rogers, President, Colorado Professional Fire
25 Fighters; Steve Trujillo, President, Colorado State Fire Fighters
26 Association; Todd Richardson, State Fire Management Officer, Bureau
27 of Land Management Colorado State Office; Willie Thompson, Fire and
28 Aviation Management Director, U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain
29 Region; and each member of Colorado's congressional delegation.