

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 369

To require the National Institute of Standards and Technology to conduct research on public safety communication coordination standards among wildland firefighters and fire management response officials.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 17, 2023

Mrs. KIM of California (for herself, Ms. STANSBURY, and Mr. NEGUSE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

A BILL

To require the National Institute of Standards and Technology to conduct research on public safety communication coordination standards among wildland firefighters and fire management response officials.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “NIST Wildland Fire
5 Communications and Information Dissemination Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7 In this Act:

1 (1) DIRECTOR.—The term “Director” means
2 the Director of the National Institute of Standards
3 and Technology.

4 (2) MEMBER AGENCY.—The term “member
5 agency” means a member agency of the National
6 Interagency Fire Center, including the Bureau of In-
7 dian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National
8 Park Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric
9 Administration, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, For-
10 est Service, United States Fire Administration, and
11 the Department of Defense.

12 (3) WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER.—The term
13 “wildland firefighter” means any person who partici-
14 pates in wildland firefighting activities.

15 (4) FIRE MANAGEMENT RESPONSE OFFI-
16 CIALS.—The term “fire management response offi-
17 cials” means regional fire directors, deputy regional
18 fire directors, agency officials who directly oversee
19 fire operations, fire management officers, and indi-
20 viduals serving on incident management teams.

21 (5) TECHNOLOGY MANUFACTURERS.—The term
22 “technology manufacturers” means companies that
23 manufacture communications technologies used by
24 Federal, State, Tribal, and local wildland fire au-
25 thorities.

1 **SEC. 3. RESEARCH.**

2 (a) **REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ON PUB-**
3 **LIC SAFETY.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of
4 the enactment of this Act, the Director, acting through
5 the head of the Public Safety and Communications Re-
6 search Division and in consultation with the Fire Research
7 Division and technology manufacturers, shall carry out re-
8 search on—

9 (1) public safety communication coordination
10 standards among Federal, State, Tribal, and local
11 wildland firefighters, fire management response offi-
12 cials, and member agencies; and

13 (2) improving and integrating existing commu-
14 nications systems to transmit secure real-time data,
15 alerts, and advisories to fire management response
16 officials and wildland firefighters.

17 (b) **REQUIREMENT TO CONDUCT FIELD TESTING OF**
18 **INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND TECHNOLOGY.**—The
19 Public Safety and Communications Research Division, in
20 consultation with the Fire Research Division and member
21 agencies, will conduct both live and virtual field testing
22 of equipment, software, and other technologies to deter-
23 mine current times of information dissemination and de-
24 velop standards for the delivery of real-time data among
25 member agencies, fire management response officials, and

1 wildland firefighters based on findings from research
2 under subsection (a).

3 **SEC. 4. RECOMMENDATIONS.**

4 (a) REQUIREMENT TO DEVELOP AND PROVIDE REC-
5 OMMENDATIONS.—The Director shall develop and publish
6 recommendations for member agencies to improve public
7 safety communication coordination standards among
8 wildland first responders and fire management response
9 officials.

10 (b) REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE RECOMMENDATIONS
11 TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET, THE OF-
12 FICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY, AND MEM-
13 BER AGENCIES.—The Director shall provide recommenda-
14 tions to the Office of Management and Budget and the
15 Office of Science and Technology Police to assist member
16 agencies with the implementation of the recommendations
17 in subsection (a).

18 **SEC. 5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

19 (a) REQUIREMENT TO REPORT RESEARCH FINDINGS
20 AND RECOMMENDATIONS.—The Director shall provide the
21 recommendations published under section 4(a) to the
22 House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology and
23 the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Trans-
24 portation.

1 (b) REQUIREMENT TO REPORT ON THE IMPLEMEN-
2 TATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than 1 year
3 after the date of the publication of the Director’s rec-
4 ommendations, the Government Accountability Office
5 shall produce a report on the extent to which member
6 agencies have implemented the Director’s recommenda-
7 tions.

8 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

9 There are authorized to be appropriated to the Na-
10 tional Institute of Standards and Technology \$3,000,000
11 for each of fiscal years 2024 through 2028 to carry out
12 this section.

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