AMENDMENT TO THE AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE TO H.R. 5781 OFFERED BY MR. GARCIA OF CALIFORNIA

Page 14, strike line 20 and all that follows through page 16, line 11 and insert the following:

(4) WILDFIRE FORECASTING AND DETECTION.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Administrator of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in collaboration with the United States weather industry and such academic entities as the Administrator considers appropriate, shall establish and maintain a program within such Administration to improve wildfire forecasting and detection.

(B) GOALS.—The goals of the program maintained under this paragraph shall be to develop and extend accurate wildfire forecasts and warnings in order to reduce loss of life, injury, property, and damage to the economy, with a focus on—

(i) improving the prediction of intensification and spread of wildfires;
(ii) improving the forecast and communication of smoke dispersion from wildfires;

(iii) improving information dissemination and risk communication to create more effective watch and warning products; and

(iv) improving the early detection of wildfires to contain their growth and mitigate damages.

(C) Elements.—In order to meet the goals outlined in subparagraph (B), the Administrator is authorized to conduct development, testing, and deployment activities related to—

(i) advanced satellite detection products;

(ii) grid-based assessments and outlooks of fuel moisture and danger levels;

(iii) coupled atmosphere and fire modeling systems;

(iv) systems to link climate predictions to achievable land management decisions; and

(v) improved spatial and temporal resolution observations in high latitudes.
(5) CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATION.—

(A) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Assistant Administrator for the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research shall establish a program to create one or more weather research testbeds, in partnership with industry and academic partners, to develop improved detection of and forecast capabilities for wildfire events and their impacts.

(B) RESOURCES.—In carrying out the program under this paragraph, the Assistant Administrator may not take resources for such testbeds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration cooperative institutes in existence as of the date of enactment of this Act.

(C) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated $15,000,000 for fiscal year 2022 to carry out the program under this paragraph.