

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Wildland Firefighters Will Face Significant Pay Cut under Wildland Firefighter Pay Protection Act

**United States** – While the recently-introduced Wildland Firefighter Pay Protection Act (WFPPA) is a small step towards better pay for the federal wildland fire workforce, it still falls short. Even if legislators vote “yes” on this act, and the President signs it into law, all federal wildland firefighters – including many of the most experienced fire leaders – will take a drastic pay cut from the temporary supplement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provided.

Hotshot Crew Superintendents stand to see a \$10,000 reduction in basic pay under the WFPPA. Other leadership positions will see even larger slashes to their paychecks. Brett Loomis, a US Forest Service fire manager, said, **“With the WFPPA, we will take up to an \$11,000 pay cut. What a lot of people don’t realize is that we are often “on call” 24 hours a day as operational Duty Officers through much of the year. This limits what I can do, and I’m not getting compensated for any of this ‘on call’ time.”** Loomis added, **“A pay cut would be a pretty big slap in the face to those of us making critical risk management decisions, and just further shows how many people, including those in my own agency, do not understand the demands of this job. I will retire the moment I’m eligible.”**

Another US Forest Service fire manager stated, **“The WFPPA actually penalizes folks that are required to stay at their duty station, such as Duty Officers, Dispatchers, and Fuels Specialists. If the agency is serious about making a difference with fuels treatments around our values at risk, this measure undermines that goal by incentivizing overtime hours away from home. With the BIL supplement, I have seen a motivated workforce, happy that their base checks were equal to a livable wage. The new act shows that the federal government would rather have me, through economic incentive, continue to pursue off-forest suppression assignments.”** He went on to say, **“You could imagine what the folks ready for retirement are saying. They will likely pack their bags, because we are not valuing the most highly qualified fire leaders.”**

Beyond its inadequacy in retaining parity with BIL-level salaries, the WFPPA addresses only the pay issue. Grassroots Wildland Firefighters (GWF) have been advocating for a pay increase as well as other reforms related to work-life balance, mental health care, and physical health programs. Luke Mayfield, President of GWF, said, **“While a pay increase is a step in the right direction, the WFPPA is just the anchor point in what looks to be a longer process. We will continue to work with agency leaders and legislators to ensure the people who choose this profession come out at the end of a successful career as a whole person who has been cared for financially, mentally, and physically.”**

The text of the WFPPA is [HERE](#). The Petition to Tell Congress to Act is [HERE](#).



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