

SOLVING THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The Congressional Action Plan for a Clean Energy Economy and a Healthy, Resilient, and Just America

REDUCE THE RISK OF WILDFIRES AND INCREASE FOREST HEALTH

To prevent loss of life, maintain healthy forest ecosystems, and reduce wildfire damage, the federal government needs to work with states, local governments, tribes, and territories to identify, mitigate, and prepare for current and future wildfire risks. Fire resilient communities need to plan carefully about how and where to build, and fire resilient forests need to be managed to balance ecological and human concerns.

CONGRESS SHOULD:

Establish a national wildfire mitigation strategy to guide federal investments in wildfire resilience.

Support community wildfire planning by strengthening federal programs to map wildfire and smoke risk, assist wildfire emergency preparedness, and invest in wildfire resilience projects.

Reduce wildfire risk by broadening the adoption of wildfire resilience-based codes and standards.

Restore and protect forests through land management that balances public safety, ecological health, and climate benefits, such as using prescribed burns and preserving intact forest landscapes.

Invest in electric grid infrastructure, operations, and maintenance to reduce the risk of wildfires triggered by electric power equipment.

Deploy distributed energy resources to provide backup power in case of grid failure or intentional public safety power shutoffs, prioritizing hospitals and other critical infrastructure.

Preserving Our Forests while Protecting Our Communities

Climate change is producing longer and more intense wildfire seasons. In 2018, wildfires claimed more than 100 lives and caused \$24.5 billion in damage in the United States. California experienced its costliest and deadliest wildfire year on record, with several fires triggered by faulty electric grid infrastructure. Fires are a natural part of forest ecosystems, but as wildfires grow in frequency and intensity, larger areas of forests will burn, releasing carbon into the atmosphere and exposing communities to toxic smoke. At the same time, rapid population growth in and around forests, especially in the Western United States, is expanding wildfire risk.

