

Western Governors voice support for Wildfire Disaster Funding Act

March 19, 2015

The Western Governors' Association sent a letter to Congress on March 19 expressing their support for two wildfire-related bills. The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act of 2015 (S. 235), introduced by Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR), and The Wildfire Disaster Funding Act (H.R. 167), introduced by Rep. Michael Simpson (R-ID), adjust the way that discretionary funds may be used for wildfire suppression. These bills would help mitigate the current practice of "fire borrowing," or paying to fight wildfires and for wildfire suppression with funding originally intended for preventative purposes. The letter highlights the importance of restoration and preparation in preventing forest fires, work that has been negatively impacted under the current funding regime. The two bills would change the wildfire suppression funding structure to more closely mirror the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) budgeting for other natural hazards.

Sources: Congress, E&E News, Western Governors Association
