

Amendment offered by Rep. Andrea Salinas

Amendment description

The amendment would authorize various activities in connection with Civilian Conservation Centers, which are residential workforce development or training facilities for underserved youth that are operated by the Department of the Interior or the Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The amendment requires USDA and Interior to offer at Civilian Conservation Centers specialized training programs focused on (1) forestry and rangeland management, (2) wildland firefighting, or (3) any other topic related to the mission of the Forest Service or Interior or the public interest. The Amendment authorizes USDA and Interior to directly hire qualified individuals who have successfully completed a Civilian Conservation Center training program without regard to certain civil service hiring requirements.

Additionally, the amendment requires USDA and Interior to establish a pilot program to expand available housing for wildland firefighters, volunteers, partner crew members, interns, and other agency employees. To carry out the program, USDA and Interior must employ individuals who are enrolled in a training program at a Civilian Conservation Center.

AMENDMENT

OFFERED BY MS. SALINAS OF OREGON

At the end of section 10105, add the following:

1 (e) CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS.—Public Law
2 91–378 (16 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) is amended by adding
3 at the end the following new title:

4 **“TITLE III—CIVILIAN**
5 **CONSERVATION CENTERS**

6 **“SEC. 301. DEFINITIONS.**

7 “In this title:

8 “(1) CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTER.—The
9 term ‘Civilian Conservation Center’ means any resi-
10 dential workforce development or training facility for
11 underserved youth operated by the Department of
12 the Interior or the Department of Agriculture.

13 “(2) COVERED GRADUATE.—The term ‘covered
14 graduate’ means an individual who successfully com-
15 pleted a training program at a Civilian Conservation
16 Center.

17 “(3) COVERED STUDENT.—The term ‘covered
18 student’ means an individual who is enrolled in a
19 training program at a Civilian Conservation Center.

1 “(4) SECRETARIES.—The term ‘Secretaries’
2 means—

3 “(A) the Secretary of Agriculture; and

4 “(B) the Secretary of the Interior.

5 **“SEC. 302. CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CENTERS WILDFIRE**
6 **AND CONSERVATION TRAINING PROGRAM.**

7 “(a) SPECIALIZED TRAINING PROGRAMS.—The Sec-
8 retaries, in coordination with the Secretary of Labor, shall
9 offer at Civilian Conservation Centers specialized training
10 programs focused on—

11 “(1) forestry and rangeland management;

12 “(2) wildland firefighting; or

13 “(3) any other topic relating to the mission of
14 the Forest Service or the Department of the Interior
15 or the public interest.

16 “(b) PRIORITIZATION.—The Secretaries shall
17 prioritize offering specialized training programs under
18 subsection (a) at facilities described in section 147(d) of
19 the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C.
20 3197(d)).

21 **“SEC. 303. WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING WORKFORCE DEVEL-**
22 **OPMENT PILOT.**

23 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

24 “(1) EXPERIMENT, RESEARCH, OR DEMONSTRA-
25 TION PILOTS.—The Secretary of Agriculture, in co-

1 ordination with the Secretary of Labor, may carry
2 out experimental, research, or demonstration pilots
3 to provide career and technical education curricula
4 and course offerings to advance the missions of the
5 Department of Agriculture at Civilian Conservation
6 Centers operated by the Department of Agriculture,
7 including facilities described in section 147(d) of the
8 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29
9 U.S.C. 3197(d)).

10 “(2) CURRICULA AND COURSES.—Curricula and
11 courses described in paragraph (1) include—

12 “(A) incident management and emergency
13 response logistics;

14 “(B) disaster response;

15 “(C) forest products measurement;

16 “(D) timber sale administration and prepa-
17 ration;

18 “(E) heavy equipment operation;

19 “(F) equipment and mechanical services;

20 “(G) industrial electrical;

21 “(H) machining;

22 “(I) mill operations;

23 “(J) forest restoration;

24 “(K) habitat and water quality monitoring;

25 “(L) watershed and habitat enhancement;

1 “(M) range management;
2 “(N) recreation access improvement;
3 “(O) volunteers and visitors enhancement;
4 and
5 “(P) historic preservation.

6 “(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out subsection
7 (a), the Secretary of Agriculture shall—

8 “(1) identify workforce needs in public land
9 agencies, forest, conservation, and recreation indus-
10 tries, and rural communities, after consulting with
11 State governments and agencies, Federal emergency
12 management and public land agencies, local commu-
13 nities, institutions of higher education, and Indian
14 Tribes;

15 “(2) develop marketing, recruitment, and reten-
16 tion materials for the curricula and courses offerings
17 provided under subsection (a);

18 “(3) provide specialized staff necessary to teach
19 curricula and courses offerings provided under sub-
20 section (a), to the extent practicable; and

21 “(4) improve Civilian Conservation Center fa-
22 cilities and modernize equipment used for the pur-
23 poses of career and technical education.

1 **“SEC. 304. WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING WORKFORCE EN-**
2 **HANCEMENT.**

3 “(a) RECRUITMENT GOALS AND INVESTMENTS.—

4 “(1) RECRUITMENT GOAL.—The Secretaries—

5 “(A) shall each set goals of—

6 “(i) hiring 300 covered graduates an-
7 nually to contribute to wildland firefighting
8 or other critical workforce needs within the
9 respective Department of each of the Sec-
10 retaries;

11 “(ii) a certain percentage of covered
12 graduates annually attaining employment
13 within the wildland firefighting, natural re-
14 sources, forestry, or a related field; and

15 “(iii) a certain percentage of covered
16 graduates annually attaining employment;
17 and

18 “(B) may make investments to support the
19 recruitment, training, hiring, and retention of
20 covered graduates.

21 “(2) SIGNING BONUS.—The Secretaries may
22 provide for a signing bonus to enable the successful
23 employment and transition of covered graduates, in-
24 cluding for the purpose of securing housing in rural
25 and remote communities.

1 “(b) DIRECT HIRE AUTHORITY.—For fiscal year
2 2026, and each fiscal year thereafter, the Secretaries may
3 appoint, without regard to the provisions of subchapter I
4 of chapter 33 of title 5, United States Code, other than
5 sections 3303 and 3328 of that title, a covered graduate
6 directly to a position for which the covered graduate meets
7 Office of Personnel Management qualification standards.

8 “(c) PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT.—The Secretaries
9 shall ensure that appropriate career pathways are devel-
10 oped for covered graduates of relevant Civilian Conserva-
11 tion Center training programs.

12 “(d) DISADVANTAGED YOUTH EMPLOYMENT.—Not-
13 withstanding any other provision of law, the Secretaries
14 may employ covered students at regular rates of pay for
15 necessary hours of work.

16 “(e) USE OF COVERED STUDENTS FOR CONTRACTS,
17 AGREEMENTS, AND GRANTS.—To the maximum extent
18 practicable, the Secretary of Agriculture shall encourage
19 the use of covered students to fulfill obligations under con-
20 tracts, agreements, and grants relevant to the training ad-
21 ministered by the Forest Service at a unit of the National
22 Forest System where a Civilian Conservation Center is lo-
23 cated.

1 **“SEC. 305. WILDLAND FIREFIGHTING HOUSING PILOT PRO-**
2 **GRAM.**

3 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretaries shall establish
4 a pilot program to employ covered students to improve and
5 expand the housing stock owned by the Federal Govern-
6 ment for the purpose of housing wildland firefighters, vol-
7 unteers, partner crewmembers, interns, and other agency
8 employees.

9 “(b) REQUIREMENTS.—In carrying out the pilot pro-
10 gram under subsection (a), the Secretaries shall—

11 “(1) identify properties currently owned by the
12 Federal Government that would be appropriate
13 housing for wildland firefighters, volunteers, partner
14 crewmembers, interns, and other agency employees;

15 “(2) identify areas where the construction of
16 new housing described in paragraph (1) would be
17 appropriate and sustainable; and

18 “(3) submit to Congress a prioritized list of
19 projects for renovation with a plan for how the Sec-
20 retaries will employ covered students to repair, ren-
21 ovate, and remediate the properties identified under
22 paragraph (1).

23 **“SEC. 306. REPORT.**

24 “Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment
25 of this title, the Secretaries shall submit to the Committee
26 on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry of the Senate and

1 the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representa-
2 tives a report—

3 “(1) describing underutilized capacity at Civil-
4 ian Conservation Centers, based on an assessment
5 conducted by the Secretaries; and

6 “(2) identifying the investments, improvements,
7 and efficiencies necessary to utilize the full capacity
8 of Civilian Conservation Centers.”.

