



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

To: Subcommittee on Federal Lands Republican Members
From: Subcommittee on Federal Lands Staff: Aniela Butler (Aniela@mail.house.gov),
Brandon Miller (Brandon.Miller@mail.house.gov), Hannah Devereaux
(Hannah.Devereaux@mail.house.gov), and Will Rodriguez
(Will.Rodriguez@mail.house.gov); x6-7736
Date: Monday, December 8, 2025
Subject: Legislative Hearing on 7 Bills

The Subcommittee on Federal Lands will hold a legislative hearing on seven bills: H.R. 3924 (Rep. Neguse), “*Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act*”; H.R. 5095 (Rep. Patronis), “*HOMEFRONT Act of 2025*”; H.R. 5419 (Rep. Kean), “*Enhancing Administrative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act*”; H.R. 5729 (Rep. Crane), “*North Rim Restoration Act of 2025*”; H.R. 6365 (Rep. McGuire), “*Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act*”; H.R. 6380 (Rep. Ciscomani), “*Chiricahua National Park Act*”; and a Discussion Draft of H.R. ____ (Rep. Gottheimer), “*American Products in Parks Act*”.

The hearing will take place on **Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.** in room 1324 Longworth House Office Building.

Member offices are requested to notify Will Rodriguez (Will.Rodriguez@mail.house.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 10, if their Member intends to participate in the hearing.

I. KEY MESSAGES

- The legislation to be considered in this hearing reflects a commitment to improving public lands management, strengthening community resilience, and enhancing Americans’ quality of life through practical, results-driven reforms and initiatives.
- Together, these bills address the need for safer and more modern infrastructure, whether by empowering the Department of War to rebuild or renovate unsafe military housing, improving agency efficiency in broadband deployment on federal lands, expediting recovery of the Grand Canyon’s fire-damaged North Rim, or allowing the construction of an emergency evacuation route in Virginia.
- The hearing also celebrates America’s upcoming 250th anniversary by designating the nation’s 64th national park and ensuring that products sold in our national parks reflect the “Made in America” values that support domestic manufacturing and American workers.

II. WITNESSES

Panel I (Members of Congress)

- *To Be Announced*

Panel II (Outside Experts)

- **Mr. John Dillon**, Executive Director, Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association, Flagstaff, AZ [H.R. 5729]
- **Mr. Brian Wachtendorf**, Chief Warrant Officer 3 (Ret.), U.S. Army, Shallowater, TX [H.R. 5095]
- **Mr. Brian Ford**, Vice President, Federal Regulatory, NTCA – The Rural Broadband Association, Arlington, VA [H.R. 5419]
- **Mr. Curtis Sheets**, Chief, Wintergreen Fire & Rescue, Nellysford, VA [H.R. 6365]
- **Mr. Greg Hancock**, Mayor, City of Willcox, Willcox, AZ [H.R. 6380]
- **Mr. Brad White**, Chief, Grand Fire Protection District No. 1, Granby, CO [H.R. 3924] [Minority Witness]
- **Other witnesses TBA**

III. BACKGROUND

H.R. 3924 (Rep. Neguse), “Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act”

Over the past two decades, the U.S. has experienced a dramatic escalation in catastrophic wildfires. On average, more than 7 million acres burn each year, which is more than double the average seen during the 1990s.¹ Nationwide, more than one billion acres are at risk of wildland fire.² Hundreds of millions of acres of federal land are overloaded with hazardous fuels that have accumulated through a century of fire suppression and a lack of proper forest management.³ These overstocked forests are less resilient, as trees face increased competition for the water, minerals, and sunlight necessary to sustain healthy growth. Unprecedented western droughts further weakened overgrown national forests, leaving them vulnerable to wildfire.⁴ The worsening condition of our nation’s federal forests coincides with a significant expansion of the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Between 1990 and 2020, the number of homes located in the WUI increased from 30 million to 44 million, a 47 percent increase.⁵ Given this burgeoning wildfire threat, periodic reviews of our nation’s forest management and suppression strategies are especially timely.

¹ Katie Hoover, “Wildfire Statistics,” Congressional Research Service, June 1, 2023,

www.crs.gov/Reports/IF10244?source=search&guid=b82a4d954677449b918a65ece823396f&index=0.

² Testimony of Christopher French, Deputy Chief, U.S. Forest Service, before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, June 24, 2021, <https://www.energy.senate.gov/services/files/AAF7DF40-2A47-4951-ADA4-4B124AD3894F>.

³ Robert G. Ingram, “Forest Fuel Management - the Ugly Truth,” The Union, October 9, 2020, www.theunion.com/opinion/columns/robert-g-ingram-forest-fuel-management-the-ugly-truth/.

⁴ Devin Fehely, “California drought leading to tens of millions of trees dying in state,” CBS News, July 25, 2022, www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/california-drought-leading-to-tens-of-millions-of-trees-dying-in-state/. “Drought and disease in California forests leaves behind an estimated 36 million dead trees, survey finds,” CNN, February 10, 2023, www.cnn.com/2023/02/10/us/california-drought-millions-trees-dead/index.html.

⁵ “Where Humans and Forests Meet: The Rapidly Growing Wildland-Urban Interface,” U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, April 2024, www.fs.usda.gov/nrs/pubs/Rooted-in-Research/nrs_rooted-res_28-april2024.pdf.

Sponsored by Rep. Joe Neguse (D-CO-02), H.R. 3924 aims to strengthen our nation’s understanding of, and response to, the growing wildfire and forest health crisis by requiring the Department of the Interior (DOI), the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and the Department of Homeland Security to conduct a comprehensive review of the U.S. wildfire landscape every four years. By establishing a structured, recurring evaluation process, H.R. 3924 seeks to renew and strengthen the Quadrennial Fire Review (QFR), which began in 2005 and was last issued in 2014.⁶ The renewal of an externally-led QFR was included as a part of the Wildfire Management and Mitigation Commission’s recommendation to develop a periodic, quantitative review of the comprehensive wildfire environment to assist adaptive management.⁷ The review initiated by H.R. 3924 would assess management challenges and examine the public health implications of wildfires. The legislation also directs federal agencies to develop policy recommendations to address challenges identified in the review. Senator Ruben Gallego (D-AZ) is leading companion legislation, S. 2039, in the Senate.⁸

H.R. 5095 (Rep. Patronis), “HOMEFront Act of 2025”

The Department of War (DOW) manages one of the federal government’s largest portfolios of real property.⁹ As these assets age, their conditions not only deteriorate, but also become subject to new federal



Health and Human Safety Risks at DOW Sites, **Source:** GAO and DOW, 2023.

regulations, such as the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).¹⁰ The U.S. Army alone manages more than 58,000 buildings that are at least 50 years old, with nearly 12,000 of those buildings formally designated as historic properties and 21 listed as National Historic Landmarks.¹¹ These structures span more than two centuries of U.S. military history, from Revolutionary-era housing at installations like West Point and Fort Sam Houston to post-World War II homes built under the Capehart and Wherry Acts.¹² While protecting historically

⁶ “2014 Quadrennial Fire Review,” Booz Allen Hamilton, May 2015, www.forestsandrangelands.gov/documents/qfr/2014QFRFinalReport.pdf.

⁷ *ON FIRE: The Report of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission*, Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission, September 2023, www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/wfmmc-final-report-09-2023.pdf.

⁸ S. 2039, “Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act,” 119th Congress, www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/senate-bill/2039.

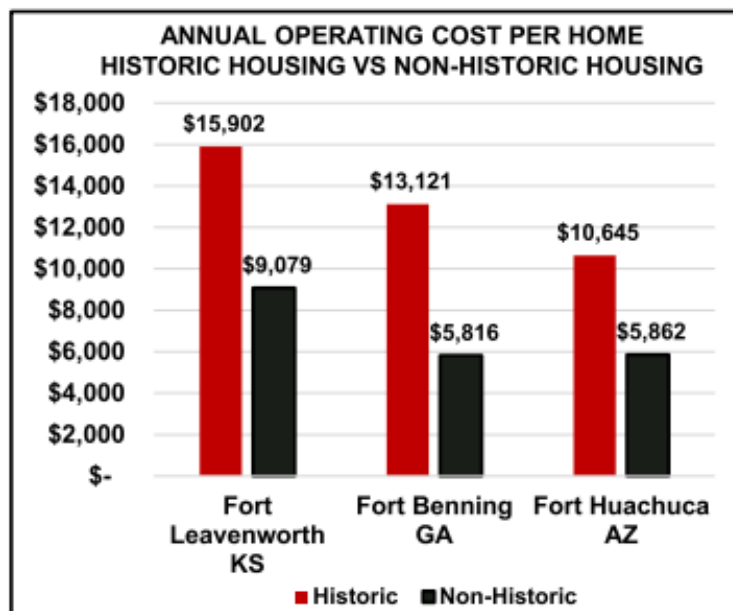
⁹ “DOD Real Property: Actions Needed to Improve Oversight of Underutilized and Excess Facilities,” U.S. Government Accountability Office, March 2025, <https://files.gao.gov/reports/GAO-25-106132/index.html>.

¹⁰ 54 U.S.C. 306108.

¹¹ “Historic Buildings and Landscapes,” U.S. Army Environmental Command, <https://aec.army.mil/Conservation/Historic-Building-and-Landscapes/>.

¹² “Department of the Army and Department of Defense Program Comments, Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement, and Army Alternate Procedures issued under the National Historic Preservation Act”, Department of War, last updated July 9, 2024, <https://www.denix.osd.mil/army-cr/army-dod-comments/>.

significant properties is a well-intentioned goal, the blanket application of NHPA to aging military housing units has created severe operational and fiscal burdens for DOW. Under Section 106 of the NHPA, any repair (including routine maintenance), rehabilitation, or demolition of structures over 50 years old triggers lengthy consultations and multiple levels of review with State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs).¹³



Annual operating cost per home, historic housing vs. non-historic housing. **Source:** DOW, 2025.

These compliance obligations strain DOW housing budgets and slow the replacement of substandard housing.¹⁴ A 2019 review by the Army's Inspector General found that Section 106 consultation processes remain cumbersome and time-consuming, creating delays that impede the timely movement of military families and reinforce the perception that SHPOs hold veto authority over renovations.¹⁵ The report also found that historic homes are 20 to 100 percent more expensive to operate and maintain, require 30 to 40 percent higher capital investment, and depend on custom, period-specific materials and craftsmanship that drive up both

costs and timelines.¹⁶ For example, at Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton, projects to preserve porches and pillars on homes built in 1896 cost DOW more than \$10 million in the past decade, while utilities from the homes' original boiler systems can cost up to \$15,000 per unit annually.¹⁷ At Fort Leavenworth, NHPA restrictions required DOW to replace porches on 94 pre-1919 homes using in-kind wood, which must be replaced every 8 to 10 years and is expensive to maintain, rather than modern composite materials, which would last more than 20 years and be less expensive to maintain.¹⁸

¹³ 36 CFR Part 800, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-36/chapter-VIII/part-800/subpart-A>.

¹⁴ Josh Farley, "Navy's 1896-built homes preserved on Bremerton's base, but it comes at a cost," Kitsap Sun, December 27, 2021, <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2021/12/27/navys-1896-built-homes-preserved-base-but-comes-cost/6411223001/>.

¹⁵ Information provided by U.S. Army, "National Historic Preservation Act Impact on Army Housing", November 5, 2025. On file with the Committee.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ Josh Farley, "Navy's 1896-built homes preserved on Bremerton's base, but it comes at a cost," Kitsap Sun, December 27, 2021, <https://www.kitsapsun.com/story/news/2021/12/27/navys-1896-built-homes-preserved-base-but-comes-cost/6411223001/>.

¹⁸ *Id.* Information provided by U.S. Army.

To address these rising costs, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) has recently expanded the use of programmatic agreements and program comments, which allow DOW to conduct a single Section 106 review for an entire category of housing, rather than complete individual project reviews.¹⁹ However, these agreements do not relieve the burden of maintaining thousands of deteriorating homes under period-accurate standards that require costly materials and design methods.²⁰ As a result, DOW remains locked into expensive maintenance obligations for aging structures that no longer meet modern living or safety standards. In many cases, SHPO requirements have driven up costs dramatically. For example, SHPOs have required certain clay roof tiles of specific, discontinued sizes that add roughly \$100,000 per home; cedar shake siding of particular dimensions that increase costs by \$50,000 per home (because faux cedar alternatives are deemed unacceptable); copper gutters that cost ten times more than aluminum replacements; and window rehabilitation projects that can add an additional cost of \$20,000 to \$70,000 per home.²¹ Even architectural design services can exceed \$100,000 per project to meet documentation and review standards.²² These rigid requirements divert scarce housing funds toward preserving obsolete materials and aesthetics rather than improving safety, efficiency, and habitability for service members and their families.



Crumbling barracks at Fort Ord in California. **Source:** Associated Press, 2021.

In practice, NHPA leads to fewer modern units, more deferred maintenance, and a diminished ability to address pressing health and safety hazards that directly affect brave members of the Armed Forces and their families. Health and safety issues, including lead-based paint, asbestos, and inefficient energy systems, are increasingly common in military housing units.²³ According to recent studies and surveys, servicemembers face widespread mold, pest infestations, sewage overflows, broken locks and windows, and malfunctioning fire systems.²⁴ The Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that these issues undermine quality of life and military

¹⁹ The Army currently maintains five major Program Comments covering pre-1919, Inter-War, Capehart-Wherry, Vietnam War, and Cold War-era housing. Information provided by U.S. Army, “National Historic Preservation Act Impact on Army Housing”, November 5, 2025. On file with the Committee.

²⁰ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, “Programmatic Agreements,” https://www.achp.gov/program_alternatives/pa.

²¹ *Id.*

²² *Id.*

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ “Military Housing: Strengthened Oversight Needed to Make and Sustain Improvements to Living Conditions,” GAO-23-107038, U.S. Government Accountability Office, September 27, 2023, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-107038>. “Summary of FY25 Tenant Satisfaction Results for Headquarters Department of the Army Unaccompanied Housing,” CEL & Associates, Inc., June 2025, https://www.armyresilience.army.mil/qualityoflife/pdf/FY25_Tenant_Satisfaction_Survey_Unaccompanied_Housing.pdf.

readiness, documenting reports of methane gas exposure, theft, and sexual assault risks due to poor lighting and security.²⁵ Servicemembers interviewed by GAO universally expressed concerns about health, safety, and mental well-being.²⁶ The Army’s own survey, covering 93,000 soldiers across 46 installations, rated barracks 68 out of 100 (“below average”), with the lowest scores for move-in readiness and interior features, indicating systemic deficiencies in habitability and response times.²⁷ These findings highlight the cumulative impact of regulatory inertia. When outdated housing cannot be efficiently repaired or replaced, service members bear the human cost in their daily living environment.

Introduced by Rep. Jimmy Patronis (R-FL-01), H.R. 5095 provides a targeted, no-cost fix to this issue by exempting most military housing from outdated preservation mandates, while safeguarding truly historic assets. The bill exempts from NHPA requirements all facilities under DOW’s jurisdiction that, as of enactment, are used as military unaccompanied or family housing, allowing routine repairs, major renovations, and replacements to proceed without Section 106 consultation delays. At the same time, H.R. 5095 protects truly historic properties, in line with NHPA’s original intent, by maintaining NHPA protections for all facilities already listed on the National Register of Historic Places as of January 20, 2025, and authorizing the Secretary of War to keep up to 0.1 percent of military housing units under NHPA for particularly significant or representative examples. By removing the vast majority of military housing from the strict requirements of NHPA, while also retaining authority to protect the most meaningful properties, the legislation enables DOW to focus resources on genuinely historic structures, while directing more funds toward modern, safe units where service members live.

Separately, H.R. 5095 also prohibits landlords of privatized military housing from requiring nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) in connection with entering into, continuing, or terminating a lease, or in connection with the provision of housing-related services. Such use of NDAs has restricted tenants from sharing information about housing defects, contamination, or misconduct, stifling congressional oversight and discouraging servicemembers from reporting unsafe living conditions.²⁸ That transparency is essential to ensuring that the \$28 billion DOW has invested over the past three decades in privatized military housing translates into safe, livable conditions on the ground.²⁹

H.R. 5419 (Rep. Kean), “Enhancing Administrative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act”

An affordable and reliable connection to high-speed internet, or broadband, is vital to many aspects of modern life.³⁰ Deploying broadband technology in rural areas presents challenges due

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.*

²⁷ *Id.* Anastasia Obis, “Army’s first barracks survey highlights same old military housing failures”, Federal News Network, September 2, 2025, <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/federal-newscast/2025/09/armys-first-barracks-survey-highlights-same-old-military-housing-failures/>.

²⁸ Patricia Kime, “98 Military Families Silenced by Nondisclosure Agreements with Private Base Housing Companies,” Military.com, March 30, 2023, <https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/30/98-military-families-silenced-nondisclosure-agreements-private-base-housing-companies.html>.

²⁹ Andrew Tilghman, “Privatized Military Housing: Costs and Budgetary Issues for Congress,” R48137, Congressional Research Service, July 25, 2024, <https://www.congress.gov/crs-product/R48137>.

³⁰ Colby Leigh Rachfal, “The Digital Divide: What Is It, Where Is It, and Federal Assistance Programs,” Congressional Research Service, March 9, 2021, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46613>.

to lower population densities, vast distances, and rugged topography.³¹ In fact, broadband developers report that fiber deployment in rural areas takes, on average, between five and ten years to complete.³² To reach these areas, much of this infrastructure must be installed on federal land managed by DOI or USDA.³³ The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service process the most applications and communications use authorizations to install communications facilities on federal property.³⁴ Communications use authorizations are requests for easements, rights-of-way, leases, or other authorizations “to locate or modify a transmitting device, support structure, or other communications facility” on public lands.³⁵

However, broadband providers must endure burdensome permitting requirements and application processes imposed by both DOI and USDA.³⁶ These regulatory hurdles raise the costs of, and bring delay and uncertainty to, broadband development plans.³⁷ As a result, rural and tribal areas “tend to lag behind urban and suburban areas in broadband deployment and the speed of service offered.”³⁸ H.R. 5419, sponsored by Rep. Thomas Kean (R-NJ-07), addresses the root causes of this problem: layered permitting requirements, redundant reviews, and poor interagency coordination. Despite the Biden-Harris administration’s \$42 billion investment to expand high-speed internet access through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, the program was a complete failure and did not connect a single household to the internet.³⁹ In stark contrast, H.R. 5419 will make meaningful progress towards connecting rural and tribal communities to high-speed internet access by identifying and addressing key regulatory barriers and prioritizing staffing at the ground level to process permits. Ultimately, this legislation will streamline approvals, cut red tape, and accelerate broadband access, particularly in rural and tribal communities.

H.R. 5729 (Rep. Crane), “North Rim Restoration Act of 2025”

The Dragon Bravo Fire was the largest wildfire in the continental U.S. to date in 2025, scorching more than 145,000 acres across northern Arizona in and around Grand Canyon National Park.⁴⁰ The blaze devastated forests, decimated wildlife habitat, and destroyed more than 100

³¹ *Id.*

³² Linda Hardesty, “Whoa – the fiber permitting process could crush digital divide dreams,” Fierce Network, December 9, 2021, <https://www.fierce-network.com/broadband/whoa-fiber-permitting-process-could-crush-digital-divide-dreams>.

³³ “Special Uses—Communications Uses,” U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/special-uses/communications-uses>. *Streamlining Federal Siting Working Group Final Report*, FCC Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee, January 24, 2018, <https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/bdac-federalsiting-01232018.pdf>.

³⁴ “Broadband Deployment: Agencies Should Take Steps to Better Meet Deadline for Processing Permits,” U.S. Government Accountability Office, April 10, 2024, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-106157#>.

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Streamlining Federal Siting Working Group Final Report*, FCC Broadband Deployment Advisory Committee, January 24, 2018, <https://www.fcc.gov/sites/default/files/bdac-federalsiting-01232018.pdf>.

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ “‘People need to see it’: How politics hung up a \$42B Biden broadband program,” Politico, September 4, 2024, <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2024/09/04/biden-broadband-program-swing-state-frustrations-00175845>. “BEAD Progress Dashboard,” National Telecommunications and Information Administration, October 23, 2025, <https://www.ntia.gov/funding-programs/internet-all/broadband-equity-access-and-deployment-bead-program/progress-dashboard>.

⁴⁰ “Dragon Bravo Fire – Incident Information,” InciWeb, July 28, 2025 (daily update), <https://inciweb.wildfire.gov/incident-information/azgcp-dragon-bravo-fire>.

structures.⁴¹ This included notable visitor facilities, such as the historic Grand Canyon Lodge, an iconic landmark where generations of Americans took in sweeping views of one of our nation’s greatest natural wonders.⁴² After the fire, only 15 percent of the Lodge’s original structure remained standing, and the site contained “hazardous debris, unstable walls, and significant structural risks.”⁴³ The nearby Cabin District also incurred considerable losses, with all 64 Budget Cabins and 16 Western Cabins left beyond repair.⁴⁴ The fire also caused a sharp decline in tourism across the region, resulting in significant revenue losses for gateway communities and park operations.⁴⁵ Although the fire was fully contained by late September 2025, the North Rim of the Grand Canyon remains partially closed to visitors and faces an uncertain path to full recovery.⁴⁶ The loss of the Grand Canyon Lodge and much of the surrounding infrastructure—among the North Rim’s main attractions—created lasting uncertainties for small businesses in the area that rely on the outdoor recreation and tourism economy.⁴⁷



Bravo Fire. Source: NBC News, 2025.

H.R. 5729, introduced by Rep. Eli Crane (R-AZ-02), would expedite both infrastructure rebuilding and forest recovery efforts in the areas of Grand Canyon National Park affected by the Dragon Bravo Fire. Specifically, the bill authorizes the National Park Service (NPS) to use existing direct emergency acquisition authorities to swiftly hire qualified contractors and begin restoration work.⁴⁸ This includes forest management or restoration activities, rebuilding and improving structures, and other recovery efforts necessary to remediate fire damage. The bill grants this authority for up to five years and ensures transparency and accountability by requiring NPS to submit semiannual progress reports to Congress detailing the status of recovery efforts and the use of federal funds. This commonsense legislation is essential to preventing prolonged

⁴¹ Peter Valencia, “106 buildings destroyed, hazmat sites found in Dragon Bravo Fire aftermath,” Arizona’s Family, September 2, 2025, <https://www.azfamily.com/2025/09/02/report-106-buildings-destroyed-hazmat-sites-found-dragon-bravo-fire-aftermath/>.

⁴² “Grand Canyon Lodge,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, last updated November 14, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/places/000/grand-canyon-lodge.htm>.

⁴³ “Grand Canyon Lodge Demolition and Stabilization — Fall 2025,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, last updated November 21, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/grand-canyon-lodge-demolition-and-stabilization-fall-2025.htm>.

⁴⁴ *Id.*

⁴⁵ “Northern Arizona wildfires hurt tourism economy of Grand Canyon area,” KNAU (Arizona News), July 18, 2025, <https://www.knau.org/knau-and-arizona-news/2025-07-18/northern-arizona-wildfires-hurt-tourism-economy-of-grand-canyon-area>.

⁴⁶ “Status of the North Rim – Grand Canyon National Park,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, accessed October 7, 2025, <https://www.nps.gov/grca/northrimstatus.htm>. Scott Sistek, “Grand Canyon fire leaves almost half of North Rim structures destroyed or damaged,” New York Post, September 2, 2025, <https://nypost.com/2025/09/02/us-news/grand-canyon-fire-leaves-almost-half-of-north-rim-structures-destroyed-or-damaged/>.

⁴⁷ Kennedy Hayes, “Wildfire shuts down Grand Canyon’s North Rim, strangling tourism in Arizona-Utah towns,” Fox Business, August 14, 2025, <https://www.foxbusiness.com/small-business/wildfire-shuts-down-grand-canyons-north-rim-strangling-tourism-arizona-utah-towns>.

⁴⁸ 48 CFR 18, <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-48/chapter-1/subchapter-C/part-18>.

delays in rebuilding efforts and restoring full access to one of America’s most treasured and visited landscapes.⁴⁹ By expediting this recovery effort, H.R. 5729 supports the outdoor recreation economy, small businesses, and visitors and residents alike throughout the Grand Canyon State.

H.R. 6365 (Rep. McGuire), “Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act”

Wintergreen is a resort and residential community located off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Nelson County, Virginia. The community has only one road in and out, a longstanding safety concern for residents and first responders.⁵⁰ Over the past decade, Wintergreen’s population has grown from roughly 150 to nearly 500 year-round residents, in addition to thousands of seasonal visitors who depend on the same narrow access point during peak periods.⁵¹ Local officials warn that this single chokepoint slows emergency response and would severely impede evacuation during a wildfire, winter storm, or medical emergency.⁵² The danger posed by limited evacuation routes is well documented. For example, the 2023 Lahaina Fire claimed the lives of more than 100 people, many of whom were trapped in their vehicles on clogged roads as flames overtook neighborhoods.⁵³ The 2025 Eaton Fire in Altadena, California, and the 2018 Camp Fire in Paradise, California, similarly choked designated evacuation routes with fleeing traffic, costing numerous lives and preventing first responders from accessing residents in distress.⁵⁴ The lesson learned from each of these instances is that the difference between survival and catastrophe often comes down to whether there is more than one way out during times of emergency.

As a town that faces similar structural vulnerabilities, the Wintergreen community proposed constructing a secondary, emergency-only egress route connecting to a secondary evacuation route to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The route follows an existing dirt path on NPS land and requires approximately 30 feet of gravel to make it passable for emergency vehicles.⁵⁵ This route would not serve daily or public use and is deliberately designed to be non-intrusive, for emergency use only.⁵⁶ Wintergreen spent more than 24 years navigating federal processes, and the community invested over \$100,000 in environmental studies to complete this road.⁵⁷ However, despite strong community support, the project stalled for decades due to an NPS legal interpretation that new road connections cannot be authorized unless they existed at the time the Parkway was established.⁵⁸ The town has already constructed all portions of the road that

⁴⁹ “Visitation Statistics – Annual Visitation Statistics by Year,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, last updated February 16, 2022, <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/highlights.htm>.

⁵⁰ Charlotte Matherly, “At Wintergreen, a gravel road to nowhere prompts a bill in Congress,” Cardinal News, February 5, 2024, <https://cardinalnews.org/2024/02/05/at-wintergreen-a-gravel-road-to-nowhere-prompts-a-bill-in-congress/>.

⁵¹ *Id.*

⁵² *Id.*

⁵³ Jennifer Kelleher, “Lahaina wildfire victims made it just blocks before becoming trapped by flames, report says,” PBS News, September 14, 2024, <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/nation/lahaina-wildfire-victims-made-it-just-blocks-before-becoming-trapped-by-flames-report-says>.

⁵⁴ Jean Lee, et al., “The families of L.A. wildfire victims confront the failures that prevented escape,” NBC News, February 8, 2025, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/los-angeles-california-wildfires-victims-no-escape-rcna191087>. J. Matt, “Paradise Redux,” Places Journal, March 2024, <https://placesjournal.org/article/paradise-redux-five-years-after-camp-fire/#:~:text=The%20Camp%20Fire%20in%20November.85%20percent%20of%20its%20buildings>.

⁵⁵ Charlotte Matherly, “At Wintergreen, a gravel road to nowhere prompts a bill in Congress,” Cardinal News, February 5, 2024, <https://cardinalnews.org/2024/02/05/at-wintergreen-a-gravel-road-to-nowhere-prompts-a-bill-in-congress/>.

⁵⁶ *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Id.*

traverse non-federal lands and only requires access to a small footprint of federal land to fully complete this project.⁵⁹ Without this right-of-way, completing the final gravel segment, even during a life-threatening evacuation, could expose responders to federal penalties. To address this clear and preventable danger, Rep. John McGuire (R-VA-05) introduced H.R. 6365, the “Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act,” which directs the Secretary of the Interior to issue a right-of-way to Wintergreen for its emergency route upon the completion of any required reviews. This legislation ensures that residents, visitors, and first responders are not trapped in a catastrophic event with no safe way to escape, while minimizing disturbances to federal land.

H.R. 6380 (Rep. Ciscomani), “Chiricahua National Park Act”



Hoodoos in the Chiricahua National Monument. **Source:** Lawrence S. Richardson Jr., 2017.

In 1924, President Calvin Coolidge established Chiricahua National Monument, located in the Chiricahua Mountains in southeastern Arizona.⁶⁰ The area, which the Apache called “The Land of Standing-Up Rocks,” is known for its ancient volcanic hoodoos, pinnacles, and other rock

formations.⁶¹ NPS administers this 12,000-acre monument, of which over 85 percent is designated as wilderness.⁶² Chiricahua National Monument contains evidence of diverse human history spanning thousands of years, including that of prehistoric indigenous peoples, Chiricahua Apache, Buffalo Soldiers, and European American pioneers and ranchers.⁶³ The national monument also contains the Faraway Ranch, which was home to Swedish immigrants in the 19th century.⁶⁴ Chiricahua is a popular hiking and camping destination, offering several scenic hiking trails that showcase unique rock formations and forested areas boasting a wide variety of desert foliage, including prickly pear, yuccas, agave, and hedgehog cactus.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ *Id.*

⁶⁰ “Chiricahua National Monument, Management,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/chir/learn/management/index.htm>.

⁶¹ “Chiricahua National Monument, Nature and Science,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/chir/learn/nature/index.htm>.

⁶² “Foundation Document Overview Chiricahua National Monument,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, <http://npshistory.com/publications/foundation-documents/chir-fd-overview.pdf>.

⁶³ *Id.*

⁶⁴ “Chiricahua National Monument, Faraway Ranch,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, <https://www.nps.gov/chir/learn/historyculture/faraway-ranch.htm>.

⁶⁵ Mary Beth Skylis, “This Arizona Monument Could Be Our Next National Park,” Backpacker.com, March 13, 2023, <https://www.backpacker.com/news-and-events/news/chiricahua-national-monument-national-park/>.

H.R. 6380, sponsored by Rep. Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ-06), would redesignate Chiricahua National Monument as Chiricahua National Park, making it the country's 64th national park and the fourth national park located in Arizona. Local supporters of this legislation believe that elevating Chiricahua to full national park status would allow Chiricahua to take its place among the other “crown jewels” of the National Park System, increase visitation, and benefit nearby gateway communities.⁶⁶ By honoring this place of historic, natural, and cultural significance, this legislation also advances the goals of President Trump's Executive Order 14189, “Celebrating America's 250th Birthday.”⁶⁷

Rep. Ciscomani introduced similar legislation last Congress, which was included in a legislative hearing before the Subcommittee on Federal Lands.⁶⁸ Following that hearing, Rep. Ciscomani engaged with constituent Tribes on the legislation. The current version of his legislation adds a new section, which ensures that NPS follows its existing statutes and regulations regarding the protection of Tribal cultural and religious sites, while allowing Tribes access to these sacred areas. This section also grants authority to the NPS to temporarily close limited areas of the park to allow for traditional cultural and customary uses. This new section guarantees that Tribal cultural uses are protected, while appropriately balancing public access and use of the park.

Discussion Draft of H.R. (Rep. Gottheimer), “American Products in Parks Act”

Visitors' retail spending at America's national parks, which includes purchases of souvenirs, sporting goods, and other items, represents \$1.2 billion in economic output and supports at least 17,200 jobs annually.⁶⁹ Not only do NPS retail stores generate millions of dollars in revenue, but they also serve as primary touchpoints where visitors form lasting impressions of American heritage and values. Current procurement practices allow concessions stores to stock foreign-manufactured merchandise, creating a situation where souvenirs are sometimes made overseas, particularly in China.⁷⁰ Over the past two decades, NPS supported efforts to increase sales of American-made products in their retail shops, including evaluating concessionaires' and suppliers' progress towards meeting Buy American goals.⁷¹ In 2008, approximately 39 percent of merchandise was American-made, 30 percent was imported, and 31 percent was finished in the U.S.⁷² Since then, stocks of made-in-America goods have increased among top suppliers. For

⁶⁶ Sarah Min Heller, “Congress considers making Chiricahua National Monument Arizona's fourth national park,” Cronkite News, May 24, 2023, <https://cronkitenews.azpbs.org/2023/05/24/chiricahua-national-monument-arizonas-fourth-national-park/>.

⁶⁷ *Id.*

⁶⁸ H.R. 1479, the “Chiricahua National Park Act,” 118th Congress, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/1479/text>.

⁶⁹ Matthew Flyr, et al., “2024 National Park Visitor Spending Effects: Economic Contributions to Local Communities, States, and the Nation,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, September 2025, https://www.nps.gov/nature/customcf/NPS_Data_Visualization/docs/NPS_2024_Visitor_Spending_Effects.pdf.

⁷⁰ “Rep. Israel Demands Only American Products Be Sold At National Parks,” CBS New York, October 20, 2011, <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/rep-steve-israel-wants-national-parks-to-sell-only-items-made-in-the-u-s-a/>.

⁷¹ “Buy American,” U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, August 11, 2021, <https://www.nps.gov/articles/buyamerican.htm>.

⁷² The most recent year for which data is available is 2008. Products “finished” in the U.S. include products that were designed domestically, constructed abroad, and shipped back to America for decorations or finishing touches. Carli Jones, “Made In America: National Park Concessionaires Offering More Items Made In America,” National Parks Traveler, August 11, 2014, <https://www.nationalparkstraveler.org/2014/08/made-america-national-park-concessionaires-offering-more-items-made-america25486>.

example, in 2014, Delaware North produced around 45 percent of its products completely in America, while Xanterra claimed 68 percent of its retail items were made in America.⁷³

The discussion draft of H.R. _____, sponsored by Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ-05), requires products sold in gift shops and visitor centers within National Park System units to be produced in the U.S. Specifically, the legislation requires any retail product in an NPS gift shop to be processed and finished in the U.S. using American-made and -sourced components or ingredients. The bill supports key Republican priorities of reshoring jobs and reducing dependency on foreign supply chains, while strengthening American small businesses in gateway communities. By supporting American-made products in America's Best Idea, this legislation also advances President Trump's Executive Order 14189, "Celebrating America's 250th Birthday."⁷⁴

IV. MAJOR PROVISIONS & SECTION-BY-SECTION

H.R. 3924 (Rep. Neguse), "Wildfire Risk Evaluation Act"

Section 3. Quadrennial Fire Review

- Requires the Secretaries of Agriculture, the Interior, and Homeland Security to jointly conduct a quadrennial review of the "comprehensive wildfire environment in the United States." The review must include:
 - a quantitative analysis of changes in the built and natural environments since the previous review, and the effects of those changes on pre-fire mitigation, wildfire incident response, and post-fire recovery; and
 - an analysis conducted in coordination with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on the intersection between wildfire and public health.
- Requires the Secretaries to submit a report to the House Committees on Natural Resources; Homeland Security; Science, Space, and Technology; and the Senate Committees on Energy and Natural Resources; Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and Commerce, Science, and Transportation every four years. The report must:
 - include the results of the quadrennial review;
 - identify the most significant long-term wildland fire management challenges;
 - provide recommendations to improve wildland fire management;
 - evaluate the progress made toward achieving the three goals established in the 2014 "National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Update" and the 2023 "ON FIRE: The Report of the Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission";⁷⁵ and
 - highlight areas for future realignment of priorities or strategies.

⁷³ *Id.*

⁷⁴ A Presidential Document by the Executive Office of the President, "Celebrating America's 250th Birthday," February 3, 2025, <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/02/03/2025-02231/celebrating-americas-250th-birthday>.

⁷⁵ *Id.* "National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy," U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service, <https://www.fs.usda.gov/restoration/cohesivestrategy.shtml>.

H.R. 5095 (Rep. Patronis), “HOMEFRONT Act of 2025”

Section 2. Inapplicability of the National Historic Preservation Act to Certain Military Housing.

- Amends NHPA to exclude any DOW facility that, as of the date of enactment of the legislation, has been used as military unaccompanied housing or military family housing.
- Authorizes the Secretary of War to exclude specific housing units from this exemption under regulations the Secretary prescribes.
- Limits the total number of excluded units to no more than one-tenth of one percent of all military housing units under DOW’s jurisdiction.
- Requires that any facility listed on the National Register of Historic Places as of January 20, 2025, remain subject to NHPA.
- Prohibits landlords of privatized military housing from requesting current or prospective tenants to sign NDAs related to entering, continuing, or terminating a lease, or receiving services related to a unit. Specifies that any such NDA against the interests of the tenant is invalid. Allows an exception only for NDAs executed as part of litigation settlements. Applies the NDA prohibition retroactively.

H.R. 5419 (Rep. Kean), “Enhancing Administrative Reviews for Broadband Deployment Act”

Section 2. Ensuring Timely Review of Communications Use Authorizations.

- Requires the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to each study their respective departments to identify programmatic or administrative barriers, rule or regulatory inefficiencies, and the potential streamlining of processes affecting the timely review of communications use authorizations.
- Requires the Secretaries to jointly submit a report to Congress summarizing their respective findings and presenting a staffing plan to ensure timely reviews.

H.R. 5729 (Rep. Crane), “North Rim Restoration Act of 2025”

Section 2. Emergency Contracting Authority.

- Authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to use temporary emergency contracting authority to fast-track forest management or restoration activities, infrastructure rebuilding, and recovery efforts within Grand Canyon National Park in areas impacted by the Dragon Bravo Fire.
- Requires detailed semiannual reports to Congress on recovery costs, contractors, potential conflicts of interest, and project progress.
- Allows the Secretary of the Interior to request a one-year extension of this authority, subject to Congressional approval, if a new wildfire ignites within the footprint of the Dragon Bravo Fire.
- Terminates five years after the date of enactment of the bill or upon completion of recovery efforts, whichever occurs earlier.

H.R. 6365 (Rep. McGuire), “Wintergreen Emergency Egress Act”

Section 2. Right-of-Way for Emergency Exit, Blue Ridge Parkway

- Amends Section 2 of the Act of June 30, 1936, to direct the Secretary of the Interior to issue the right-of-way depicted on the reference map.
- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to certify that an evaluation of alternative routes, analysis of fire ecology behavior, and all environmental reviews are completed prior to issuing the right-of-way.

H.R. 6380 (Rep. Ciscomani), “Chiricahua National Park Act”

Section 2. Designation of Chiricahua National Park, Arizona.

- Re-designates the “Chiricahua National Monument” as “Chiricahua National Park.” Does not change the boundaries or footprint of the National Park.
- Clarifies that funding made available to the National Monument shall also be available to the National Park.
- Specifies that the National Park shall be administered in accordance with the presidential proclamations establishing and expanding the National Monument, as well as laws generally applicable to National Park System units.

Section 3. Traditional Cultural and Religious Sites.

- Reaffirms that the Secretary of the Interior must ensure protection of traditional cultural and religious sites within the National Park in accordance with existing laws applicable to NPS.
- Directs the Secretary to consult with Indian Tribes when protecting traditional cultural and religious sites, in accordance with the laws applicable to the protection of such sites.
- Requires the Secretary to provide access to Indian Tribes to certain sites for traditional cultural and customary uses.
- Allows the Secretary to close a portion of a designated area for traditional cultural and religious activities, so long as such activities are limited to the smallest area necessary and the minimum time needed.

Discussion Draft of H.R. _____ (Rep. Gottheimer), “American Products in Parks Act”

Section 2. Requiring that Items Sold in National Park System Gift Shops are Produced in the United States.

- Stipulates that one year after the bill’s enactment, a product may be sold in a gift shop or visitor center in a National Park System unit only if:
 - the final assembly or processing of the product occurs in the U.S.;
 - all significant processing that goes into the product occurs in the U.S.; and
 - all or virtually all ingredients or components of the product are made and sourced in the U.S.
- Directs the Secretary of the Interior to establish procedures for certification, auditing, and enforcement to ensure compliance with the legislation.

V. COST

A formal cost estimate from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) is not yet available for any of the bills. CBO previously scored similar legislation to the “Chiricahua National Park Act” in 2023 as having no effect on direct spending or revenues.⁷⁶

VI. ADMINISTRATION POSITION

The Trump administration’s position on these bills is unknown at this time.

VII. EFFECT ON CURRENT LAW

[H.R. 5095](#)

[H.R. 6365](#)

⁷⁶ “Cost Estimate: S. 736, Chiricahua National Park Act,” Congressional Budget Office, June 27, 2023, <https://www.cbo.gov/system/files/2023-06/s736.pdf>.