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Tim Hart Wildland Firefighter Classification and Pay Parity Act

Climate change is leading to larger, more frequent, and more destructive wildfires across Colorado and the West. In 2020, the three largest fires in Colorado's history burned more than half a million acres and in 2021, the Marshall Fire became the most destructive fire in the state's history, burning over a 1,000 homes.

Wildland firefighters are on the front lines of these crises, protecting Coloradans and their communities. Despite their critical work, the federal government has not provided adequate compensation or benefits to wildland firefighters for decades. Difficulties recruiting and retaining federal wildland firefighters, alongside increasingly frequent fires, have stretched the current wildland firefighter workforce to its limits. The Tim Hart Wildland Firefighter Classification and Pay Parity Act (Tim's Act) will build a robust and resilient workforce by ensuring that wildland firefighters are fairly compensated for their difficult and dangerous work. The legislation is named after Tim Hart, a smokejumper who lost his life after parachuting into a wildland fire in New Mexico.

The Tim's Act would:

- Significantly increase base pay for wildland firefighters by establishing special pay rates at all grades levels and ensuring that all wildland firefighters make at least \$20 an hour
- Pay wildland firefighters for all hours they are mobilized to fight a fire by creating a new form of premium pay, incident standby premium pay
- Provide paid rest and recuperation leave following work on wildland fires
- Create a national database to track chronic disease caused by on-the-job environmental exposure and develop recommendations to minimize exposure
- Launch new mental health programs and provide seven days of mental health leave
- Allow firefighters to credit temporary years of service to retirement and include premium pay in the calculation of retirement pay
- Provide housing stipends for all firefighters on duty more than 50 miles from their primary residence
- Provide tuition assistance for all permanent federal employees in the wildland firefighter classification
- Allow firefighters who are not eligible for the Family and Medical Leave Act unpaid leave to care for family members with serious health conditions