



Honoring Fallen Wildland Firefighters Act

Summary

Wildland firefighters play a critical role in protecting our communities from the effects of longer, hotter, and more dangerous wildfire seasons. They serve our communities, while risking their own livelihoods. So far in 2026, at least 14 wildland firefighters have died in service.

Currently, survivors of federally employed wildland firefighters killed in the line of duty are eligible for a maximum death benefit of \$10,000.

The bipartisan **Honoring Fallen Wildland Firefighters Act**, led by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and John Curtis (R-UT), would provide death benefits to the survivors of fallen firefighters equivalent to those granted to fallen members of the military—who are currently eligible for up to \$100,000 death benefit payments.

This bill would specifically:

- Amend the *Federal Employees' Compensation Act* to establish a new death benefit for individuals serving as wildland firefighters, on par with that available to members of the military.
- Ensure any individual serving as a wildland firefighter is eligible for this death benefit—whether they are a contractor or federal, state, or local employee.

Folks who step up to serve as wildland firefighters and face the hazards of battling deadly blazes deserve the assurance that their family will be taken care of if killed in the line of duty. The **Honoring Fallen Wildland Firefighters Act** would ensure the sacrifice that wildland firefighters make is honored and acknowledged.