

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to provide hazardous fuels transportation grants, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. KELLY (for himself, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. LUJÁN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, and Mr. SCHIFF) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Agriculture to establish a program to provide hazardous fuels transportation grants, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Hazardous Fuels
5 Transportation Assistance Act of 2026”.

6 **SEC. 2. HAZARDOUS FUELS TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE**
7 **PROGRAM.**

8 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1 (1) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term “eligible
2 recipient” means—

3 (A) a for-profit entity;

4 (B) a nonprofit organization;

5 (C) a State;

6 (D) a unit of local government;

7 (E) an Indian Tribe; and

8 (F) an institution of higher education.

9 (2) FIRESHED.—The term “fireshed” means a
10 landscape-scale area, as delineated using methods
11 developed through research conducted by the Forest
12 Service, that represents similar source levels of com-
13 munity exposure to wildfire.

14 (3) HAZARDOUS FUELS MANAGEMENT ACTIV-
15 ITY.—The term “hazardous fuels management activ-
16 ity” means a vegetation management activity con-
17 ducted on National Forest System land that reduces
18 the risk of wildfire, including mechanical thinning,
19 mastication, timber harvest, grazing, the removal of
20 downed or damaged timber resulting from a tornado,
21 hurricane, ice storm, windthrow event, or other nat-
22 ural disaster that the Secretary determines increases
23 the risk of wildfire, and any combination of those ac-
24 tivities.

1 (4) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term “Indian Tribe”
2 has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the
3 Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance
4 Act (25 U.S.C. 5304).

5 (5) NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM.—The term
6 “National Forest System” has the meaning given
7 the term in section 11(a) of the Forest and Range-
8 land Renewable Resources Planning Act of 1974 (16
9 U.S.C. 1609(a)).

10 (6) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
11 the Secretary of Agriculture.

12 (7) STATE.—The term “State” means—

13 (A) each of the several States;

14 (B) the District of Columbia; and

15 (C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

16 (b) HAZARDOUS FUELS TRANSPORTATION
17 GRANTS.—

18 (1) ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSE.—Not later
19 than 180 days after the date of enactment of this
20 Act, the Secretary shall establish a program to pro-
21 vide grants on a competitive basis to eligible recipi-
22 ents for the purpose of incentivizing the removal of
23 material from a hazardous fuels management activ-
24 ity conducted under a contract or agreement entered
25 into with the Secretary, acting through the Chief of

1 the Forest Service, as of the date of the application
2 submitted under paragraph (2).

3 (2) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a
4 grant under paragraph (1), an eligible recipient shall
5 submit to the Secretary an application that includes,
6 at a minimum, a description of—

7 (A) the project to be carried out using the
8 grant, including the estimated cost of the
9 project and how the grant would be used for
10 the project; and

11 (B) how the project would meet the pur-
12 pose described in paragraph (1), including one
13 or more reasons the material from the haz-
14 ardous fuels management activity would not be
15 utilized without the grant.

16 (c) ELIGIBLE USES.—An eligible recipient that re-
17 ceives a grant under subsection (b) shall use the grant
18 for one or more of the following:

19 (1) Transportation of byproducts from the haz-
20 ardous fuels management activity, including
21 roundwood, chips, biomass, and other byproducts, as
22 determined by the Secretary.

23 (2) Costs associated with woodyards, loading fa-
24 cilities, scales, and custom chipping.

1 (3) Purchasing, modifying, or leasing equip-
2 ment that shall be used primarily to facilitate the ef-
3 ficient transport of material from a hazardous fuels
4 management activity, which may include equipment
5 to process such material into a form more conducive
6 to such transport.

7 (4) Maintenance of equipment directly related
8 to the transportation of hazardous fuels from a haz-
9 ardous fuels management activity.

10 (5) Workforce development for training and
11 certifications necessary for projects carried out
12 under this section, including in partnership with In-
13 dian Tribes.

14 (6) Any other expenses determined necessary
15 and appropriate by the Secretary for the transport
16 of hazardous fuels.

17 (d) INELIGIBLE USES.—An eligible recipient that re-
18 ceives a grant under subsection (b) shall not use the grant
19 for—

20 (1) construction or capital improvements, in-
21 cluding processing facilities;

22 (2) stumpage or timber purchases; or

23 (3) any other expenses the Secretary determines
24 ineligible.

1 (e) PRIORITIZATION.—In awarding grants under sub-
2 section (b), the Secretary shall give priority to proposals
3 that would—

4 (1) treat hazardous fuels in high-risk firesheds,
5 as determined by the Secretary;

6 (2) maximize the number of acres treated for
7 hazardous fuels;

8 (3) maximize the volume of hazardous fuels to
9 be transported;

10 (4) maximize the retention of existing forest
11 products infrastructure;

12 (5) develop new or expand existing wood proc-
13 essing facilities;

14 (6) maximize the potential to increase the utili-
15 zation of forest products long-term;

16 (7) utilize material from a hazardous fuels
17 management activity as part of a project under—

18 (A) the Collaborative Forest Landscape
19 Restoration Program established under section
20 4003 of the Omnibus Public Land Management
21 Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7303); or

22 (B) the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restora-
23 tion Partnership program established under sec-
24 tion 40808 of the Infrastructure Investment
25 and Jobs Act (16 U.S.C. 6592d); and

1 (8) remove material from a hazardous fuels
2 management activity using one or more of—

3 (A) a good neighbor agreement under sec-
4 tion 8206 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (16
5 U.S.C. 2113a);

6 (B) a stewardship contracting project en-
7 tered into under section 604 of the Healthy
8 Forests Restoration Act of 2003 (16 U.S.C.
9 6591c);

10 (C) a self-determination contract or self-
11 governance compact agreement entered into
12 under the Indian Self-Determination and Edu-
13 cation Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 5301 et seq.);
14 and

15 (D) an agreement or contract entered into
16 under the Tribal Forest Protection Act of 2004
17 (Public Law 108–278; 118 Stat. 868).

18 (f) FUNDING.—

19 (1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—
20 There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out
21 this section \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal years
22 2027 through 2031.

23 (2) LIMITATIONS.—

1 (A) GRANT AMOUNT.—The Secretary shall
2 not expend more than \$3,000,000 for any one
3 grant under this section in any one fiscal year.

4 (B) PURCHASING EQUIPMENT.—An eligible
5 recipient shall not use more than \$250,000 of
6 the amount of a grant under this section in any
7 one fiscal year for purchasing equipment under
8 subsection (c)(3).

9 (3) COST-SHARE.—

10 (A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
11 subparagraph (B), an eligible recipient may re-
12 ceive a grant under this section in an amount
13 equal to not more than 75 percent of the cost
14 of carrying out the project under this section.

15 (B) INDIAN TRIBES.—An Indian Tribe
16 may receive a grant under this section in an
17 amount equal to not more than 90 percent of
18 the cost of carrying out the project under this
19 section.