



AMENDMENT NO. _____ Calendar No. _____

Purpose: To require the Secretary of Agriculture to reinstate the thousands of Forest Service employees who have been removed, to improve Forest Service staff capacity, and to defend the essential services Forest Service employees perform, such as managing the forests and protecting the forest ecosystems of the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES—119th Cong., 1st Sess.

S. 1462

To improve forest management activities on National Forest System land, public land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, and Tribal land to return resilience to overgrown, fire-prone forested land, and for other purposes.

Referred to the Committee on _____ and
ordered to be printed

Ordered to lie on the table and to be printed

AMENDMENT intended to be proposed by Mr. WELCH

Viz:

1 At the end, add the following:

2 **TITLE V—FOREST SERVICE**
3 **STAFFING**

4 **SEC. 501. STAFF CAPACITY.**

5 (a) PROHIBITION ON REDUCTIONS IN FORCE.—Not-
6 withstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary
7 shall not carry out any reduction in force pursuant to part
8 351 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor

1 regulations), of any employee or probationary employee of
2 the Forest Service, except for cause on charges of mis-
3 conduct, delinquency, or performance.

4 (b) RESTORATION OF STAFFING.—Nothing in this
5 Act shall take effect until the date on which the number
6 of employees employed at the Forest Service, including
7 full-time, part-time, and seasonal employees, is equal to
8 not less than the number of employees employed at the
9 Forest Service on January 20, 2025.

10 (c) CANCELLATION OF HIRING FREEZE.—Executive
11 Order 14170 (90 Fed. Reg. 8621; relating to Reforming
12 the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Gov-
13 ernment Service) and the memorandum of the President
14 entitled “Memorandum on Ensuring Accountability and
15 Prioritizing Public Safety in Federal Hiring” and dated
16 July 7, 2025, shall not apply with respect to the Forest
17 Service.

18 (d) NOTIFICATION TO CONGRESS OF WORKFORCE
19 RESTRUCTURING.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 30 days be-
21 fore carrying out a covered workforce restructuring
22 of the Forest Service, the Secretary shall submit a
23 notification to—

24 (A) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutri-
25 tion, and Forestry of the Senate;

3

1 (B) the Committee on Health, Education,
2 Labor, and Pensions of the Senate;

3 (C) the Committee on Homeland Security
4 and Governmental Affairs of the Senate;

5 (D) the Committee on Energy and Natural
6 Resources of the Senate;

7 (E) the Committee on Agriculture of the
8 House of Representatives;

9 (F) the Committee on Education and the
10 Workforce of the House of Representatives;

11 (G) the Committee on Oversight and Gov-
12 ernment Reform of the House of Representa-
13 tives;

14 (H) the Committee on Homeland Security
15 of the House of Representatives; and

16 (I) the Committee on Natural Resources of
17 the House of Representatives.

18 (2) DEFINITION OF COVERED WORKFORCE RE-
19 STRUCTURING.—In this subsection, the term “cov-
20 ered workforce restructuring” means either of the
21 following:

22 (A) The payment of voluntary separation
23 incentive payments under subchapter II of
24 chapter 35 of title 5, United States Code (or

1 any regulations issued to carry out that sub-
2 chapter) to not fewer than 10 employees.

3 (B) Offering voluntary early retirement to
4 not fewer than 10 employees described in sec-
5 tion 8336(d)(2) or 8414(b)(1)(B) of title 5,
6 United States Code, or any regulations issued
7 to carry out either such provision.