

NFFE News



NFFE Sends Letters to USDA and Congress Reinforcing Support for the Wildland Firefighter Paycheck Protection Act

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This week, the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) sent letters to the [Senate](#), [House](#), and [USDA leadership](#) reinforcing support for the Wildland Firefighter Paycheck Protection Act (WFPPA). This comes in response to a proposed Continuing Resolution drafted by the House Freedom Caucus, which aimed to reallocate funds designated for mental health programs and paycheck corrections in a careless effort to push back the pay cliff facing federal wildland firefighters.

“Our country is already experiencing a shortage of wildland firefighters nationwide, across all sectors,” the [letter to Congress](#) reads. “These firefighters do not want to leave federal service. We believe federal wildland firefighters are the best trained, most cohesive, honorable, and committed workforce you will find anywhere. Our federal wildland firefighters have made it clear that they can no longer endure the uncertainty that comes with a pay cliff or only a temporary pay raise. I don’t blame them. Many are barely making ends meet now. The WFPPA is a triage bill to stop the mass resignation we know is underway and keep our firefighters in the jobs they love protecting our communities.”

In the [letter](#) to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Forest Service Chief Randy Moore, NFFE President Randy Erwin stated, “To address the rampant mental health issues among federal wildland firefighters, Congress provided funding through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). It is inconceivable that Congress would now turn and take that funding away. It must instead be used for its intended purpose. Wildland firefighters need support programs to help them deal with the hazardous nature of the job. We as a nation owe it to them for their sacrifice and service in protecting us from megafires and other disasters.”

“We are running down to the wire before the pay cliff sets in,” said Erwin. “Our union is doing everything we can to ensure Congress understands the severity of the situation. By and large, folks in both chambers and on both sides of the aisle are supportive of the WFPPA. We cannot let a few holdouts avoid their duty to their constituents and the country. We cannot let these lawmakers deny firefighters their hard-earned wages or mental health programs. In the coming days, our union will be going to Capitol Hill, sending additional letters, creating more media attention, and fighting like hell to make sure Congress gets this right.”

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