



# EMBER ACT

ENHANCING MITIGATION & BUILDING EFFECTIVE RESILIENCE

---

## THE PROBLEM:

As the American West gets drier, wildfires are becoming a more significant threat—devastating our communities and costing billions of dollars in damages. Since 2020, Arizona and Utah have seen a combined total of 11,650 reported wildfires that have resulted in more than 2,260,000 acres burned.

Current federal wildland fire policy is a patchwork of legislation and agency guidance scattered across departments and jurisdictions, further complicated by mixed landownership. These antiquated policies fail to address the current and emerging needs our communities face to mitigate and manage wildfires.

## BACKGROUND:

In 2021, Senators Romney and Kelly introduced the *Wildland Fire Mitigation and Management Commission Act* to establish a commission to study and recommend fire prevention, mitigation, management, and rehabilitation policies. The senators secured inclusion of the wildfire commission in the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, which was signed into law later that year.

The Commission was made up of 50 stakeholders representing federal agencies, state, local, and Tribal governments, as well as the private sector, including Arizonans Lucinda Andreani and Neil Chapman, and Utahns Kathy Holder and Bill Cox. After more than a year of work, the Commission released two reports providing scores of recommendations to Congress ranging from aviation fleet procurement to prescribed and cultural burning. The Commission's second and final report was released in September 2023.

## THE EMBER ACT:

Senators Kelly and Romney turned 29 of the Commission's recommendations into legislation designed to modernize and improve federal wildfire policies.

The *Enhancing Mitigation and Building Effective Resilience (EMBER) Act* would:

- Ease burdens placed on states and localities by allowing FEMA to reduce or waive matching or cost sharing requirements for wildfire planning and recovery projects.
- Provide incentives for repurposing waste derived from restoration activities and risk reduction into sustainable fuels and other commercialized goods.
- Support investments in wood processing facilities, sawmills, and biomass facilities in areas that have need for wildfire risk reduction.
- Expand targeted grazing by providing nonrenewable and temporary grazing permits and leases to reduce fine fuel loads.
- Update policies and guidance for post-fire incident recovery, including debris removal, emergency protective measures, and toxicity of drinking water resulting from wildfires.
- Expand wildfire response and suppression training and prescribed fire training to local fire entities.
- Direct the Secretaries of Agriculture, Interior, and Homeland Security to develop uniform wildfire hazard datasets.

**U.S. SENATORS MARK KELLY (D-AZ) AND MITT ROMNEY (R-UT)**

