
HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 4009

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Representatives Springer, Abell, Reed, and Reeves

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1 TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
2 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
3 THE UNITED STATES, IN CONGRESS ASSEMBLED, AND TO THE SECRETARY OF THE
4 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, AND TO THE SECRETARY OF THE
5 UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
8 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, President Trump signed Executive Order 14308 on June 12,
10 2025, directing the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture to,
11 among other things, consolidate their wildland fire programs to
12 achieve the most efficient and effective use of wildland fire
13 offices, budgets, and programs; and

14 WHEREAS, In response to this directive, the Secretary of the
15 Interior signed Secretarial Order 3443 on September 10, 2025,
16 directing the creation of a plan for consolidation and the
17 establishment of a United States Wildland Fire Service reporting
18 directly to the Secretary of Interior; and

19 WHEREAS, Secretarial Order 3443 also directs the consolidation
20 plan to be complete and approved by the Secretary prior to the
21 implementation date of January 12, 2026; and

22 WHEREAS, The Secretary of the Department of Agriculture issued
23 Secretarial Memorandum 1078-017, directing reforms to improve

1 performance, eliminate redundancies by consolidating key
2 administrative functions, and streamline the overall function of the
3 interagency wildfire response system; and

4 WHEREAS, The United States Forest Service had a reported
5 reduction of 5,000 employees and the Department of Interior had a
6 reported reduction of 7,500 employees through the Deferred
7 Resignation Program and Voluntary Early Retirement Authority, and the
8 federal administration has announced plans for additional reductions
9 in force, but it is unclear what the additional reductions will
10 include; and

11 WHEREAS, It is unknown how many of these reductions impacted
12 staff that participated in wildland fire response, including the
13 potential reduction in the number of available Complex Incident
14 Management Teams; and

15 WHEREAS, Given this uncertainty, it is critical that Washington
16 State at a minimum maintain, but ideally strengthen, its own wildfire
17 response, invest in forest management, and ensure communities are
18 prepared due to the uncertainties in the federal firefighting
19 capacity and structure;

20 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully request that the
21 federal government take appropriate steps to ensure the federal
22 wildfire response entities have the capacity to protect communities
23 and infrastructure, limit impacts to natural resources and
24 watersheds, and conduct these activities in a manner that protects
25 wildland firefighter health and safety, including through the
26 following:

27 (1) Ensure that the consolidation of the Department of Interior
28 Wildland Fire Service be fully operational and staffed by April 1,
29 2026, to enable a coordinated, cohesive response capability ahead of
30 the 2026 wildfire season;

31 (2) Delay any further reorganization, which may include the
32 United States Forest Service, until wildland fire activity has
33 subsided nationally to a Preparedness Level 2; and

34 (3) Provide that the unification process, if implemented, should
35 be done carefully and deliberately to avoid reduction of wildland
36 firefighting capacity in 2027.

37 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
38 transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker
39 of the House of Representatives, each member of Congress from the
40 State of Washington, the Secretary of the United States Department of

1 Agriculture, and the Secretary of the United States Department of the
2 Interior.

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