



November 14, 2021

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1401 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Suzanne Bonamici  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2231 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry McNerney  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2265 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ed Perlmutter  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1226 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Lofgren, McNerney, Bonamici & Perlmutter,

On behalf of the scientists, researchers, students and a wide spectrum of technologists who make up the CO-LABS network I want to thank you for co-sponsoring H.R. 5781 - the National Wildland Fire Risk Reduction Program Act. The spectrum of federal agency scientific research laboratories in Colorado are a key resource for the country's crucial goals to mitigate the destruction of such extreme wildland fire events, which as you know have been growing more fierce in their intensity and frequency.

The whole-of-government approach the bill calls for is a strategic necessity; the National Wildland Fire Risk Reduction Program and the associated coordinating Committee that would be established would be greatly assisted by the research coming from ongoing projects within numerous labs across our state.

We note the goals of this legislation includes a coordinated effort across at least ten federal agencies to:

1. improve the understanding and prediction of the fire environment, wildland fires, associated smoke, and their impacts, including in the wildland-urban interface (WUI); on communities, buildings and other infrastructure; and social and economic impacts;
2. develop and encourage the adoption of science-based and cost-effective measures to prevent and mitigate wildland fire and associated smoke impacts; and
3. improve the understanding and mitigation of the impacts of climate change and variability on wildland fire risk, frequency, and severity.

We further note a few relevant themes of research occurring in Colorado that would serve the goals of this legislation:

- The National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) is part of the National Science Foundation's LEAP-HI program, with a mission to redefine wildfire risk monitoring and management through the development of a new computational platform. The platform is

intended for use by wildfire managers, emergency responders and utility companies to plan for, respond to, and mitigate the risk of wildfires.

- The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)'s fire research activities range from improving long-range seasonal and subseasonal predictive tools that provide early indications of drought extent and severity, through advancing the skill of short-range models that identify changes in weather that alter fire behavior, to post-fire runoff and flood forecasts. In addition to the significant wildland fire research NOAA produces the agency is also partner to several relevant efforts, including the National Interagency Fire Center, which produces a National Significant Wildland Fire Potential Outlook every month.
- The Energy Security and Resilience Center at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory works to incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies in communities recovering from natural disasters such as wildfires; one of NREL's longest-running partnerships is with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Through partnership agreements, NREL provides technical assistance for local implementation of resilience during disaster recovery efforts.

These are only three references to a broad realm of research and resources that could be included in the efforts of this legislation.

CO-LABS supports this vision to formalize significant cooperation between federal agencies and partners - thank you for your leadership of this imperative national safety and security issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Powers", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Dan Powers  
Executive Director  
CO-LABS, Inc.  
[dan@co-labs.org](mailto:dan@co-labs.org)

CO-LABS, incorporated in 2007, is a non-profit consortium of federally funded scientific laboratories, universities and colleges, businesses and economic development experts organized to nurture and champion Colorado as a global leader in scientific research, technology, and related commercialization.

Through events, economic analyses, strategic communications and networking activities we work to:

- PROMOTE Colorado's research ecosystem as a global center in research and technology
- EDUCATE the public about the labs' impact and importance of sustained funding for research
- CONNECT the labs, universities and businesses to facilitate partnerships and technology transfer

See more at [www.co-labs.org](http://www.co-labs.org).