



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY

Opening Statement

Ranking Member Zoe Lofgren (D-CA)

Full Committee Markup of:

H.R. 369, NIST Wildland Fire Communications and Information Dissemination Act

H.R. 4090, Fire Grants and Safety Act of 2023

H.R. 4143, National Construction Safety Team Enhancements Act of 2023

June 21, 2023

Thank you, Chairman Lucas.

Today the Science Committee will markup three good bipartisan bills that will each make our communities safer by better equipping us to deal with threats from fire and infrastructure failure.

First on the roster is H.R. 4090, the Fire Grants and Safety Act. This bill reflects the Science Committee's sustained, long-term support for our nation's fire fighters. We are committed to ensuring that our first responders have the training, equipment, and staffing necessary to provide their communities with lifesaving services. This legislation provides these brave men and women with vital resources, and I am very proud to be an original cosponsor.

Next, we will consider H.R. 369, the NIST Wildland Fire Communications and Information Dissemination Act. This bill builds on NIST's strengths to better address the growing threat of wildland fires across our country.

Our cutting-edge federal research programs at NIST can provide improvements to the communication and data systems that are used by first responders. These first responders are on the frontlines battling the intense, climate change driven, wildland fires that have devastated communities in California and across the western U.S. I look forward to supporting this bill.

Lastly, we will consider my bill H.R. 4143, the National Construction Safety Team Enhancements Act. I want to thank the Chair for cosponsoring this important bill. I will discuss this bill further when it is called up, but I will note that it fills a gap in existing authorities for examining the causes of certain structure failures. We need in-depth engineering analyses of how structures fail to know how to build more resilient infrastructure going forward. H.R. 4143 broadens the purview of the National Construction Safety Team at NIST to cover investigations of failure of major infrastructure. This simple change in the law is posed to save both lives and property.

And with that said, I believe this will be a quick and productive markup, I thank the Chairman, and yield back.