



## Legislative Council Staff

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## Memorandum

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September 16, 2019

**TO:** Wildfire Matters Review Committee

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**SUBJECT:** History of Wildfire Matters Review Committee Legislation

### Summary

This memorandum summarizes all legislation proposed by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee since its creation in 2013.

### Wildfire Committee Legislation

The Wildfire Matters Review Committee was created by Senate Bill 13-082 as a permanent interim committee to review state policies and resources addressing wildfire prevention and mitigation. Senate Bill 18-039 extended the committee through 2025.

Since 2013, the Wildfire Matters Review Committee has proposed 23 bills. Of these, 17 were enacted by the General Assembly. The committee has also proposed 8 resolutions or memorials concerning wildfire issues and recognizing firefighters, all of which were adopted. Table 1 provides a bill number, summary, and the disposition of each piece of legislation proposed by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee between 2013 and 2018.

**Table 1**  
**Legislation Proposed by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee**

Bill Number	Summary	Disposition
<b>2018</b>		
Senate Bill 19-019	Allowed a county to adopt a resolution to prohibit the sale and use of fireworks between May 31 and July 5.	Enacted into law.
Senate Bill 19-020	Required the Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting in the Department of Public Safety to study and, if feasible, implement a system to patrol the airspace above a wildland fire.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 19-1006	Appropriated \$1.0 million to the Department of Higher Education for allocation to the State Forest Service at Colorado State University (CSU) for the Forest Restoration and Wildfire Risk Mitigation Grant Program. <sup>1</sup>	Enacted into law.
LLS 19-0220	Created the Colorado Fire Commission in the Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire Prevention and Control.	Not approved by Legislative Council. <sup>2</sup>
<b>2017</b>		
Senate Bill 18-039	Extended the repeal date of the Wildfire Matters Committee until September 1, 2025, and specified that the committee may recommend no more than five bills each interim.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 18-1051	Increased the penalty for leaving a campfire unattended or failing to extinguish a campfire to a class 3 misdemeanor and removed county unattended fire signage requirements.	Enacted into law.
Senate Joint Memorial 18-001	Requested that Congress fund the costs for catastrophic wildfire response outside the normal budgets for federal forest management agencies.	Adopted.
<b>2016</b>		
House Bill 17-1026	Required the reexamination of reverse mortgage exceptions for borrowers who are temporarily unable to occupy their home due to a natural disaster or an incident beyond the borrower's control that makes the home uninhabitable.	Postponed indefinitely.
Senate Joint Memorial 17-001	Requested that Congress fund the costs for catastrophic wildfire response outside the normal budgets for federal forest management agencies.	Adopted.
Senate Joint Resolution 17-002	Requested state and federal agencies to support the continued use of biochar from Colorado forest biomass products.	Adopted.

<sup>1</sup>As proposed by the committee, this bill would have created a Forest Management Fuels Reduction Projects Grant Program.

<sup>2</sup>Senate Bill 19-040, which was not a Wildfire Matters Review Committee bill, created a Colorado Fire Commission and was enacted into law.

**Table 1 (Cont.)**  
**Legislation Proposed by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee**

Bill Number	Summary	Disposition
<b>2015</b>		
Senate Bill 16-003	Added broadcast burning to the types of projects and methods for which the Department of Natural Resources may award grants from the Wildfire Risk Reduction Fund, and transferred \$1.0 million from the General Fund into the cash fund. <sup>3</sup>	Enacted into law.
House Bill 16-1019	Added broadcast burning to the types of projects and methods for which the Colorado State Forest Service may award watershed restoration grants.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 16-1040	Created the Auxiliary Emergency Communications Unit within the Office of Emergency Management at the Department of Public Safety.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 16-1052	Repealed the wildfire mitigation income tax deduction and replaced it with an income tax credit of up to \$2,500 for 25 percent of the cost of wildfire mitigation measures.	Postponed indefinitely.
Senate Joint Memorial 16-002	Requested that Congress fund the costs for catastrophic wildfire response outside the normal budgets for federal forest management agencies.	Adopted.
Senate Joint Resolution 16-002	Recognized firefighters killed in the line of duty.	Adopted.
<b>2014</b>		
Senate Bill 15-009	Created a grant program to encourage the use of woody biomass as a fuel source in public buildings and appropriated \$1.0 million to the grant program.	Postponed indefinitely.
Senate Bill 15-022	Transferred \$1.0 million from the Severance Tax Operational Fund to the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program. <sup>4</sup>	Enacted into law.
House Bill 15-1008	Provided that when the productivity of agricultural land is destroyed by a natural cause, the land will retain its agricultural classification for a rehabilitation period.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 15-1017	Set requirements for creating a volunteer fire department in areas of the state lacking organized fire protection services.	Enacted into law.
Senate Joint Resolution 15-004	Requested action from the federal government concerning wildfire suppression and mitigation.	Adopted.

<sup>3</sup>As proposed by the committee, this bill would have transferred \$3.0 million into the fund – \$1.5 million from the General Fund and \$1.5 million from the Severance Tax Operational Fund.

<sup>4</sup>As proposed by the committee, this bill would have transferred \$9.8 million from the General Fund to fund three years of grants.

**Table 1 (Cont.)  
Legislation Proposed by the Wildfire Matters Review Committee**

Bill Number	Summary	Disposition
<b>2013</b>		
Senate Bill 14-008	Created an online resource center for homeowners, fire professionals, the media, and educators through the Department of Public Safety.	Enacted into law.
Senate Bill 14-046	Created a fund for making need-based grants to local governing bodies for equipment and training designed to increase firefighter safety and prevent occupation-related diseases and funded it at \$3.25 million per year of federal mineral lease revenue.	Enacted into law.
Senate Bill 14-047	Directed the Division of Fire Prevention and Control to make a lump-sum payment of \$10,000 to the survivors of a seasonal wildland firefighter employed by the state or a local government who is killed in the line of duty.	Enacted into law.
Senate Bill 14-097	Provided that public agencies are not liable for the actions of private insurance companies and their agents, although these companies may engage in activities to protect the property of their policyholders in the event of an emergency.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 14-1007	Modified the ability of county governments to prohibit or restrict agricultural burning and fireworks use.	Deemed lost.
House Bill 14-1008	Allowed the Colorado Water Resources and Power Development Authority to make loans to private entities for forest health projects.	Enacted into law.
House Bill 14-1009	Repealed the wildfire mitigation income tax deduction and replaced it with an income tax credit of up to \$2,500 for half the cost of wildfire mitigation measures.	Deemed lost.
House Bill 14-1010	Made technical changes to the state's prescribed burning program.	Enacted into law.
Senate Joint Resolution 14-006	Honored the Granite Mountain Interagency Hotshot firefighting crew, which lost 19 of its members in an Arizona fire in 2013.	Adopted.
Senate Joint Resolution 14-009	Honored the Colorado Army National Guard and Air National Guard for their wildfire response efforts.	Adopted.