



# Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology

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## **Wildland Firefighters Urge Congress to Reject Logging Bill *H.R. 4200 could increase fire risks and safety hazards to firefighters***

Eugene, OR – Wildland firefighters called on Congress today to defeat H.R. 4200, a controversial logging bill headed to a vote in the House of Representatives soon, saying it fails to address the urgent needs of both wildland firefighters and rural communities.

In a recent letter to Members of Congress, Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics and Ecology (FUSEE) raised concerns that H.R. 4200 could increase fire risks and undermine efforts to reduce hazardous fire conditions near communities.

“H.R. 4200 does not help protect communities *before* severe wildfires ignite, and could increase the risk of wildfire by diverting resources away from necessary fuels reduction around homes to logging in the backcountry,” said Rich Fairbanks, FUSEE Executive Committee Member.

Post-fire logging followed by industrial tree planting can create a volatile mix of logging debris, invasive weeds, and highly-flammable young trees. Wildfires are prone to sudden “blow-ups” of extreme fire behavior when they enter young plantations, causing increased wildfire risks and safety hazards to firefighters.

“Fire-prone plantations created by H.R. 4200 will compel firefighters to aggressively fight all future fires, even in fire-dependent ecosystems during conditions that may be ideal for managing fire for fuels reduction and forest restoration benefits,” said Timothy Ingalsbee, executive director of FUSEE. “The sooner communities are prepared for fire, the sooner firefighters can use all the tools of modern fire management, including prescribed burning and wildland fire use.”

Firefighters United for Safety, Ethics, and Ecology (FUSEE) is a Eugene based, non-profit organization of wildland firefighters and other fire management specialists promoting firefighter and community safety, and ethical and ecological fire management.

A copy of FUSEE’s letter to Congress is available at [www.FUSEE.org](http://www.FUSEE.org). (Click on Spotfire/News Room)

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