

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION URGING POLICIES THAT**
2 **REDUCE DAMAGE FROM WILDFIRES**

3 2019 GENERAL SESSION

4 STATE OF UTAH

5 **Chief Sponsor: Raymond P. Ward**

6 Senate Sponsor: Ronald Winterton

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This resolution urges the federal government to pursue policies that allow for easier
10 reduction of excess forest fuel loads.

11 **Highlighted Provisions:**

12 This resolution:

- 13 ▶ notes that recent wildfire seasons have been exceptionally destructive;
- 14 ▶ notes the impact that wildfire has on air quality in Utah;
- 15 ▶ urges the federal government to pursue forest fuel load reductions to mitigate
- 16 wildfire risk; and
- 17 ▶ urges that entities work together to find policies regarding effectively using
- 18 prescribed burns.

19 **Special Clauses:**

20 None

21 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

22 WHEREAS, recent fire seasons in Utah have been exceptionally destructive, including
23 the 2018 fire season which included 485,989 acres and 400 structures burned and fire-fighting
24 costs estimated to be \$150,000,000;

25 WHEREAS, because of smoke from wildfires, Utah's air quality during the summer of
26 2018 was much worse than usual along the Wasatch Front with a large increase in the number
27 of unhealthy red air quality days;

30 WHEREAS, if wildfires continue to worsen, it will come with a terrible cost in terms of
31 dollars to fight the fires and increased loss of property and loss of human life; and

32 WHEREAS, federal land management policies that encourage a large amount of excess
33 fuel load to accumulate in our forests are also a contributing factor to worsening wildfires:

34 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
35 Governor concurring therein, urges the federal government to pursue policies that allow for
36 common sense fuel load reductions in Utah's forests, including allowing for appropriate salvage
37 logging to occur before timber loses its economic value.

38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor urge that the
39 Legislature, through the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee,
40 work with the executive branch, through the Utah Department of Natural Resources, and their
41 federal counterparts in the United States Forest Services to find policies that can improve our
42 abilities to effectively use prescribed burns, including options for revising the Regional Haze
43 State Implementation Plan to allow for easier permitting of prescribed burns during times of
44 the year with low fire risk.

45 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the members of
46 Utah's federal delegation, the chief of the United States Forest Service, and the director of the
47 United States Bureau of Land Management.