

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 8118

To utilize the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response to Operations program of NASA to improve aerial responses to wildfires, and for other purposes.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 23, 2024

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California (for himself and Ms. McCLELLAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

---

## A BILL

To utilize the Advanced Capabilities for Emergency Response to Operations program of NASA to improve aerial responses to wildfires, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Advanced Capabilities  
5 for Emergency Response Operations Act of 2024” or the  
6 “ACERO Act of 2024”.

1 **SEC. 2. ADVANCED CAPABILITIES FOR EMERGENCY RE-**  
2 **SPONSE OPERATIONS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Administrator shall leverage  
4 NASA-developed tools and technologies to conduct re-  
5 search and development activities under the Advanced Ca-  
6 pabilities for Emergency Response Operations (ACERO)  
7 program to improve aerial responses to wildfires.

8 (b) GOALS.—The research and development activities  
9 conducted under subsection (a) shall, to the extent prac-  
10 ticable, address the following:

11 (1) Advanced aircraft technologies and airspace  
12 management efforts to assist in the management,  
13 deconfliction, and coordination of aerial assets dur-  
14 ing wildfire response efforts.

15 (2) Information sharing and real-time data ex-  
16 change for wildfire response teams.

17 (3) Development of an interoperable platform to  
18 provide situational awareness of aerial assets during  
19 wildfire response.

20 (4) Establishment of a multi-agency concept of  
21 operations, which may involve Federal, State, and  
22 local government agencies, to enable coordination of  
23 aerial activities for wildfire response.

24 (c) COLLABORATION.—In carrying out this section,  
25 the Administrator—

1           (1) may coordinate and collaborate with other  
2 Federal, State, and local government agencies, re-  
3 gional organizations, and commercial partners and  
4 academic institutions involved in wildfire manage-  
5 ment; and

6           (2) shall, to the maximum extent practicable,  
7 consult with the heads of other Federal departments  
8 and agencies to avoid duplication of activities.

9 (d) PROHIBITION.—

10           (1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in this  
11 subsection, the Administrator may not procure an  
12 unmanned aircraft system to conduct activities de-  
13 scribed in this section if such unmanned aircraft sys-  
14 tem is manufactured or assembled by a covered for-  
15 eign entity.

16           (2) EXEMPTION.—The Administrator may  
17 waive the prohibition under paragraph (1) on a case-  
18 by-case basis if the Administrator—

19                   (A) determines that the procurement of an  
20 unmanned aircraft system is—

21                           (i) in the national interest of the  
22 United States; and

23                           (ii) necessary for the sole purpose of  
24 improving aerial responses to wildfires; and

1           (B) notifies the Committee on Science,  
2           Space, and Technology of the House of Rep-  
3           resentatives and the Committee on Commerce,  
4           Science, and Transportation of the Senate not  
5           later than 30 days after a determination in the  
6           affirmative under subparagraph (A).

7           (e) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Not later than one year  
8           after the date of the enactment of this Act and annually  
9           thereafter until December 31, 2029, the Administrator  
10          shall submit to the Committee on Science, Space and  
11          Technology of the House of Representatives and the Com-  
12          mittee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the  
13          Senate a report describing the activities, including results,  
14          carried out pursuant to this section 2. Each such report,  
15          at minimum, shall contain the following:

16               (1) A description of any research and develop-  
17               ment activities.

18               (2) A description of the Administrator’s activi-  
19               ties pursuant to subsection (c).

20               (3) An assessment of the effectiveness of such  
21               activities in preventing injuries and loss of life, pro-  
22               tecting property, and reducing economic damage.

23               (4) An identification of any topics related to  
24               improvement of aerial responses to wildfires that  
25               could benefit from further research.

1           (5) A description of any continuing efforts  
2 under this section.

3           (6) Any other information determined appro-  
4 priate by the Administrator.

5           (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
6 authorized to be appropriated \$15,000,000 for fiscal year  
7 2025 to carry out this section.

8           (g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9           (1) ADMINISTRATOR.—The term “Adminis-  
10 trator” means the Administrator of the National  
11 Aeronautics and Space Administration.

12           (2) COVERED FOREIGN ENTITY.—The term  
13 “covered foreign entity” has the meaning given such  
14 term in section 1832 of the National Defense Au-  
15 thorization Act for Fiscal Year 2024 (Public Law  
16 118–31).

17           (3) NASA.—The term “NASA” means the Na-  
18 tional Aeronautics and Space Administration.

19           (4) UNMANNED AIRCRAFT SYSTEM.—The term  
20 “unmanned aircraft system” has the meaning given  
21 such term in section 44801 of title 49, United  
22 States Code.

○