AMENDMENT TO RULES COMMITTEE PRINT

118–10

OFFERED BY MR. NEGUSE OF COLORADO

Add at the end of title XVIII of division A the following:

SEC. 18. UNITED STATES FIRE ADMINISTRATION MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM FOR WILDLAND FIREFIGHTERS.

(a) MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM.—Subject to the availability of appropriations, not later than 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture shall establish and carry out a program for Federal wildland firefighters for mental health awareness and support. Such program shall include—

(1) a mental health awareness campaign;

(2) a mental health education and training program that includes an on-boarding curriculum;

(3) an extensive peer-to-peer mental health support network for Federal wildland firefighters and their immediate family;

(4) expanding the Critical Incident Stress Management Program through training, developing, and
retaining a larger pool of qualified mental health professionals who are familiar with the experiences of the wildland firefighting workforce, and monitoring and tracking mental health in the profession to better understand the scope of the issue and develop strategies to assist; and

(5) establish and carry out a new and distinct mental health support service specific to Federal wildland firefighters and their immediate family, with culturally relevant and trauma-informed mental health professionals who are readily available and not subject to any limit on the number of sessions or service provided.

(b) MENTAL HEALTH LEAVE.—Each Federal wildland firefighter shall be entitled to 7 consecutive days of leave, without loss or reduction in pay, during each calendar year for the purposes of maintaining mental health. Such leave may only be taken during the period beginning on June 1 and ending on October 31 of any such year. If leave is not taken under this section it expires after October 31 of the calendar year.

(c) WILDLAND FIREFIGHTER DEFINED.—In this Act, the term “wildland firefighter” means any temporary, seasonal, or permanent position at the Department of Agriculture or the Department of the Interior, or Tribal
Firefighters, that maintains group, emergency incident management, or fire qualifications, as established annually by the Standards for Wildland Fire Position Qualifications published by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and primarily engages in or supports wildland fire management activities, including forestry and rangeland technicians and positions concerning aviation, engineering heavy equipment operations, dispatch, training, development and technology, or fire and fuels management.