

WASHINGTON – A House subcommittee has approved legislation introduced by U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell to reauthorize the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA) and provide additional resources to the nation's firefighters.

H.R. 4847, the United States Fire Administration Reauthorization Act of 2007, was passed yesterday by the House Committee on Science and Technology's Subcommittee on Technology and Innovation. Mitchell serves as vice chairman of the panel.

"In Arizona, we know how important it is that our firefighters have the tools they need to fight wildfires," said Mitchell. "This legislation takes an important step forward in equipping our firefighters to respond quickly and safely to fire emergencies."

This legislation ensures that the USFA will continue to provide vital assistance in emergency events such as natural disasters, such as wildfires last year, everyday house fires, and terrorist attacks.

The USFA Reauthorization Act

- Extends the USFA authorization for four years to 2012 and authorizes funding for the USFA.
- Provides firefighters with training on modern day issues facing firefighters including firefighting in the wildland-urban interface, response coordination to multiple large-scale events, hazardous material incidents, and advanced emergency medical services issues.
- Improves the National Fire Incident Reporting system and increases access to the data by directing the USFA to update the National Fire Incident Reporting system to an Internet-based, real-time incident reporting database system.
- Directs the USFA to work with Emergency Medical Services to coordinate efforts.

H.R. 4847 will be considered by the full Science and Technology Committee on Feb. 27.