

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES.

Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Mann Gulch fire by designating August 5, 2024, as “Mann Gulch Memorial Tribute Day”.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Mann Gulch fire by designating August 5, 2024, as “Mann Gulch Memorial Tribute Day”.

Whereas, on August 5, 1949, the United States was shocked by a wildland fire-fighting tragedy in which 12 United States Forest Service smokejumpers and 1 district fire guard, a former smokejumper, tragically died when they were overtaken by a raging Mann Gulch forest fire in the Helena National Forest;

Whereas the smokejumpers answered a routine fire call from their base in Missoula, Montana, and after successfully landing by parachutes near the fire and beginning the process to contain and extinguish it, they were trapped as the fire exploded beneath them;

Whereas 8 of the 13 men who lost their lives were United States military veterans who served with distinction in World War II;

Whereas Bob Salle, 1 of 3 smokejumpers who survived the fire stated on the occasion of the 50th Mann Gulch Anniversary Memorial, “It is time to rededicate ourselves to the memory of these fine young men and the lesson they best taught us, that wildfires are, and always will be, dangerous and we must respect its potential to put a fire fighter in harm’s way. Life is precious—and for some very short”;

Whereas on the 75th Anniversary of this tragedy the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest and the National Smokejumpers Association will honor the memory of these young men by organizing memorial tribute activities—

(1) in Helena, Montana;

(2) at Mann Gulch; and

(3) at each of the 13 individual gravesites across the United States in Montana, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, North Carolina, and California;

Whereas this tragedy resulted in improved training, safety equipment, and fire-fighting strategies and the development of scientific research in fire behavior; and

Whereas, in the words of a sister of one of the Mann Gulch fatalities, “You think back, and you just wish, you hope that these men are not completely forgotten”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of

3 the Mann Gulch fire, honors the memory of Joseph

1 Sylvia, Robert Bennet, Marvin Sherman, Silas R.
2 Thompson, Stanley Reba, Newton Thompson, Leon-
3 ard Piper, Davide Navon, Phillip McVey, Henry
4 Thol, James Harrison, Eldon Diettert, and William
5 Hellman who died in service to their country pro-
6 tecting our national resources;

7 (2) expresses heartfelt appreciation to all cur-
8 rent men and women who fight wildfires today
9 across the United States; and

10 (3) proclaims that August 5, 2024, be des-
11 ignated as “Mann Gulch Memorial Tribute Day”.