

SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Department of Forestry and Department of the State Fire Marshal Wildfire Funding Workgroup

To: Ways and Means Full Committee
From: Natural Resources Subcommittee
Carrier: Senator Frederick

On March 6th, the Natural Resources Subcommittee received a joint report from the Department of Forestry and the Department of the State Fire Marshal on the Wildfire Funding Workgroup.

During the 2024 legislative session, a budget note associated with SB 5701 directed the Department of Forestry and the Department of the State Fire Marshal to convene a facilitated workgroup to identify options for sustainably funding wildfire mitigation and response. The workgroup included a wide range of members, and the report outlines six wildfire funding strategies with the broadest level of support among workgroup members.

These include utilizing the Kicker; amending the Bottle Bill; dedicating a portion of the Insurance Retaliatory Tax; dedicating a portion of the state's ending balance; a one-time transfer from the Rainy Day Fund; or constitutionally dedicating a portion of Lottery Funds. Landowner assessment rates will be part of the solution, and a subgroup continues to work on this piece.

The Natural Resources Subcommittee recommends acknowledging receipt of the report.