

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 3845

To require the United States Fire Administration to conduct on-site investigations of major fires, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 15, 2022

Mrs. GILLIBRAND (for herself and Mr. SCHUMER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To require the United States Fire Administration to conduct on-site investigations of major fires, 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 “Empowering the U.S.
5 Fire Administration Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FIRE INVESTIGATIONS.**

7 The Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act of 1974
8 (15 U.S.C. 2201 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
9 the following:

1 **“SEC. 38. INVESTIGATION AUTHORITIES.**

2 “(a) IN GENERAL.—In the case of any major fire,
3 the Administrator may send incident investigators, which
4 may include safety specialists, fire protection engineers,
5 codes and standards experts, researchers, and fire training
6 specialists, to the site of the fire to conduct an investiga-
7 tion as described in subsection (b).

8 “(b) INVESTIGATION REQUIRED.—A fire investiga-
9 tion conducted under this section—

10 “(1) shall be conducted in coordination with ap-
11 propriate Federal, State, and local authorities, in-
12 cluding Federal agencies that are authorized to in-
13 vestigate a major fire or an incident of which the
14 major fire is a part; and

15 “(2) shall examine the determined cause and
16 origin of the fire and assess broader systematic mat-
17 ters to include use of codes and standards, demo-
18 graphics, structural characteristics, smoke and fire
19 dynamics (movement) during the event, and costs of
20 associated injuries and deaths.

21 “(c) REPORT.—Upon concluding any fire investiga-
22 tion under this section, the Administrator shall issue a
23 public report to local, State, and Federal authorities on
24 the findings of such investigation, or collaborate with an-
25 other investigating Federal agency on that agency’s re-
26 port, including recommendations on—

1 “(1) any other buildings with similar character-
2 istics that may bear similar fire risks;

3 “(2) improving tactical response to similar fires;

4 “(3) improving civilian safety practices;

5 “(4) assessing the costs and benefits to the
6 community of adding fire safety features; and

7 “(5) how to mitigate the causes of such fire.

8 “(d) DISCRETIONARY AUTHORITY.—In addition to
9 investigations conducted pursuant to subsection (a), the
10 Administrator may send fire investigators to conduct in-
11 vestigations at the site of any fire with unusual or remark-
12 able context that results in losses less severe than those
13 occurring as a result of a major fire, in coordination with
14 appropriate Federal, State, and local authorities, including
15 Federal agencies that are authorized to investigate a
16 major fire or an incident of which the major fire is a part.

17 “(e) MAJOR FIRE DEFINED.—For purposes of this
18 section, the term ‘major fire’ shall have the meaning given
19 such term under regulations to be issued by the Adminis-
20 trator.”.

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