

# SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

## **Item 37: Department of Forestry 2024 Fire Season**

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To: Emergency Board  
From: Public Safety Subcommittee  
Carrier: Representative Evans

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The Public Safety Subcommittee heard a report from the Department of Forestry on the 2024 fire season and a request for \$82.1 million General Fund and \$17 million Other Funds for related costs.

The Department submitted a statutorily required report detailing the 2024 fire season, which has surpassed any previous year in terms of acres burned and total cost. Emergency fire costs total approximately \$318 million, and after federal cost recoveries, grants, and contributions, the net cost is roughly \$122 million. The General Fund requested is for the remaining balance of net emergency fire costs. However, the Department is responsible for paying gross fire costs and managing cash flows while waiting for anticipated revenues. To maintain solvency through the end of the biennium, pay vendors without delay, and assure sufficient revenue at the beginning of the next biennium to make statutorily required payments, the Department would need an appropriation of \$191.5 million General Fund.

The Public Safety Subcommittee recommends that the Emergency Board acknowledge receipt of the report and defer further action on the request to the 2024 special session.