

Cleaner Air Spaces Act (CASA)

Rep. Scott Peters Senators Michael Bennet & Jeff Merkley

Summary

CASA provides grants to fund local clean air space programs to reduce the negative public health effects of wildfire smoke. The programs must:

- 1) **Provide free air filtration units** and educational materials regarding how to set up clean air rooms to individuals vulnerable to wildfire smoke, and
- 2) **Establish clean air centers** in communities vulnerable to wildfire smoke.

Problem

Wildfires are now the largest source of particulate pollution in the United States, creating more than [40%](#) of the nation's fine particulate matter air pollution. Particulate pollution from wildfire smoke is [more harmful](#) to human health compared to other pollution sources and tens of millions of Americans are at [risk](#) of experiencing high levels of exposure. Vulnerable populations, such as infants, the elderly, and people with pre-existing health conditions such as respiratory or cardiovascular disease, are at [higher risk](#) of negative health effects from wildfire smoke. Extreme smoke events are already [increasing](#) emergency room visits and more people will be at risk as wildfires grow in frequency and intensity.

Solution

[Clean air rooms](#) are one of the most cost-effective tools to reduce negative health effects from wildfire smoke. A clean air room is a designated space set up to keep levels of smoke and other harmful air particles as low as possible during wildfire smoke events. Clean air rooms can be established inside a household (e.g., a bedroom) or established via a community clean air center (e.g., a clean air space in a library or a gym).

Bill details

- Provides grants to support local cleaner air spaces programs. The programs must:
 - provide at least 1,000 free air filtration units and one replacement filter for the air filtration units to low-income households with individuals vulnerable to wildfire smoke;
 - provide educational materials to help eligible households best utilize the air filtration unit and create a clean air room in their home;
 - establish at least one public clean air center.
- Requires grant recipients to partner with local organizations.
- Requires a report to Congress with survey data from the cleaner air spaces programs and recommendations on if and how the programs should be modified or expanded.
- The bill was modeled on several existing programs:
 - [Portside Air Quality Improvement and Relief \(PAIR\) Program](#) – San Diego.
 - [Clean Air Filtration Program](#) – San Francisco Bay Area.
 - [Clean Air Room Pilot Program](#) – San Joaquin Valley.
 - [Clean Air Rooms Pilot Program](#) – Santa Barbara County.
 - [Wildfire Smoke Clean Air Center Grant](#) – State of California.