

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 1843

To amend title 31, United States Code, to address the failure to appropriate sufficient funds to make full payments in lieu of taxes under chapter 69 of such title by exempting certain users of the National Forest System from fees imposed in connection with such use.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 10, 1997

Mr. BASS (for himself, Mr. SUNUNU, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. METCALF, Mr. PARKER, Mr. YOUNG of Alaska, Mr. BOUCHER, Mr. BONO, Mr. PASTOR, Mr. STUMP, Mr. STRICKLAND, Mr. DEAL of Georgia, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. WICKER, Mr. GRAHAM, Mrs. CUBIN, Mr. HERGER, Mr. HILL, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. RIGGS, and Mrs. EMERSON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

---

## A BILL

To amend title 31, United States Code, to address the failure to appropriate sufficient funds to make full payments in lieu of taxes under chapter 69 of such title by exempting certain users of the National Forest System from fees imposed in connection with such use.

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 “Local Free Access  
5 Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. LOCAL EXEMPTIONS FROM FOREST SERVICE USER**  
2 **FEES ON ACCOUNT OF LESS THAN FULL**  
3 **FUNDING OF PAYMENTS IN LIEU OF TAXES.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

5 (1) The Federal Government provides payments  
6 in lieu of taxes under chapter 69 of title 31, United  
7 States Code, to compensate units of general local  
8 government whose tax base is diminished by Federal  
9 ownership of lands, including Federal lands in the  
10 National Forest System administered by the Forest  
11 Service.

12 (2) Amounts appropriated to provide payments  
13 in lieu of taxes under such chapter have been signifi-  
14 cantly less than the amounts necessary to comply  
15 fully with the payment formulas contained in such  
16 chapter.

17 (3) By failing to fully fund payments in lieu of  
18 taxes to units of general local government whose ju-  
19 risdictions contain Federal lands, including National  
20 Forest System lands, the Federal Government is in-  
21 creasing the tax burden on local property owners.

22 (b) NATIONAL FOREST USER FEE EXEMPTION.—  
23 Section 6906 of title 31, United States Code, is amend-  
24 ed—

25 (1) by inserting “(a)” before “Necessary”; and

1           (2) by adding at the end the following new sub-  
2           section:

3           “(b) Unless sufficient funds are appropriated for a  
4           fiscal year to provide full payments under this chapter to  
5           each unit of general local government eligible for such pay-  
6           ments, persons residing within the boundaries of that unit  
7           of general local government shall be exempt during that  
8           fiscal year from any recreational user fees imposed by the  
9           Secretary of Agriculture for access to units of the National  
10          Forest System that lie, whole or in part, within such  
11          boundaries. The Secretary of Agriculture shall establish  
12          a method for identifying and exempting persons covered  
13          by this subsection from such user fees.”.

○