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January 27, 2021

The Honorable Phil Ting
Chair, Assembly Budget Committee
Assemblymember
California State Assembly, District 19
State Capitol, Room 6026
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Richard Bloom
Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee 3 on Climate Crisis, Resources, Energy, and
Transportation
Assemblymember
California State Assembly, District 50
State Capitol, Room 2003
Sacramento, CA 95814

Emailed to: BudgetSub3@asm.ca.gov

Re: Strong Support for Wildfire Recovery Early Budget Action

Dear Assembly Members Ting and Bloom:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), which represents all 58 counties, has been a strong advocate for funding to make California more wildfire resilient. Over the past few years, CSAC has taken the lead on a number of disaster recovery and response efforts as well as proposed changes to land use planning, forest management practices, and emergency notification procedures. We will continue to be the voice of impacted communities in the upcoming budget and legislative session, especially in the areas of wildfire prevention, community protection and disaster recovery.

Since 2019, county government leaders and other stakeholders met regularly with the Administration through the Forest Management Task Force (FMTF) to provide input into the state's Forest Resilience Action Plan. Prior to that CSAC and our member counties were actively engaged in the Governor's Tree Mortality Task, the forerunner to the FMTF. This FMTF plan has been released in conjunction with January budget proposal and includes a \$1 billion, one-time, General Fund investment for forest resilience efforts. **CSAC strongly supports the Governor's proposal to accelerate \$323 million for wildfire and forest resilience.** Not only will this support our local efforts to reduce catastrophic wildfires and restore forests and headwaters, state funding will provide a strong collaborative signal to the federal government as they develop new strategies to improve forests on federal lands.

In addition to much needed, immediate funding for resilient forests and landscapes, fuel breaks and economic stimulus, we are particularly pleased to support these regional and local funding allocations:

- \$50 million for fire prevention grants;
- \$25 million for Regional Forest and Fire Capacity; and,
- \$25 million for home hardening.

Counties are strong partners in our efforts to reduce wildfire risk. With support for regional efforts from state and federal partners, we can make continue to transform communities into resilient and wildfire hardened areas. Thank you for your consideration of our request. If you have any questions, please contact Catherine Freeman, CSAC Legislative Representative at cfreeman@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Catherine Freeman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Catherine Freeman
Legislative Representative

Cc: Members, Assembly Budget Committee
 Wade Crowfoot, Secretary, California Natural Resources Agency
 Keely Bosler, Director, California Department of Finance
 Patrick Wright, Interim Director, Governor's Forest Management Task Force
 Christian Griffith, Chief Consultant, California Assembly Budget Committee
 Susan Chan, Consultant, California Assembly Budget Committee
 Joseph Shinstock, Fiscal Director, Assembly Republican Caucus
 Kirstin Kolpitcke, Natural Resources Fiscal Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus