



September 3, 2026

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 1370 (Stern) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), and the League of California Cities (Cal Cities), we respectfully request your signature on Senate Bill 1370 (Stern), which would expedite state permit review for wildfire prevention projects.

This bill codifies your extremely successful Executive Order (N-38-25) that has expedited hundreds of critical wildfire prevention projects statewide. SB 1370 is borne out of requests from utilities, local governments, and the California Earthquake Authority to allow this common sense and transformational program to continue. Eligible projects include removal of hazardous, dead, or dying trees, creation and maintenance of strategic fuel breaks and community defensible space, roadside vegetation management, fuel management to create more fire-resilient ecosystems, prescribed fire, and removal of vegetation around utility poles, lines, and rights of way.

SB 1370 will reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires, response costs, emissions, and smoke exposure. SB 1370 importantly expedites project delivery timelines and avoids litigation delays. Permit delays, including CEQA compliance, can have catastrophic consequences, as seen when the town of Berry Creek was destroyed by a wildfire while waiting for the state to complete CEQA review associated with an \$836,000 fuel management project. With seasonal weather constraints, even a month's delay in obtaining the requisite permits can delay a project deep into the following year.

SB 1370 incorporates important environmental protections outlined in the existing statewide environmental protection plan, including coastal resource protection and avoiding impacts to protected and sensitive species altogether. SB 1370 recognizes local authority and police powers to ensure our communities are protected and avoid fire hazards from fuel reduction projects.

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In short, SB 1370 codifies long-overdue changes to the state's permitting process for a wide variety of projects that will save lives, make our communities safer, and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires.

For the above reasons, RCRC, CSAC, and Cal Cities respectfully request your signature on Senate Bill 1370. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,



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cc: The Honorable Henry Stern, Member of the California State Senate
Megan Mekelburg, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Gavin Newsom