



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Marie Waldron
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 3104
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 19 – SPONSOR

Dear Assembly Member Waldron:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am pleased to affirm our sponsorship of your Assembly Bill 19, which establishes a grant program for counties to purchase equipment to clear brush and other fire-prone materials from around local roads. RCRC is an association of thirty-six rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from those member counties.

RCRC member counties have suffered the vast majority of the State's most catastrophic wildfire events in the last decade, including the devastating Carr Fire in Shasta County in 2018. The ignition point of the Carr Fire was a vehicle spark alongside a state road flanked by dense, dry vegetation - something that could have been prevented with proper brush clearing. Subsequently, the Carr Fire destroyed more than 1,000 homes and 1,600 structures, killing five civilians and three firefighters. While California has begun numerous programs to address the State's wildfire problem, including various forest management programs as part of Senate Bill 901 (Dodd) in 2018, there is still an urgent need for short-term solutions to help protect California's communities while we work toward more resilient, fire-resistant landscapes.

AB 19 provides vital community protection capacity to local governments through a grant program to help counties purchase equipment to perform additional vegetation clearance around local roads. Many rural counties where vegetation is most dense are socioeconomically disadvantaged, and such a program will enable counties to enhance vegetation treatment programs to prevent events such as the Carr Fire from originating around county-maintained roads. Along with enhanced efforts by the California Department of Transportation to improve vegetation management around state highways, AB 19 will help prevent future ignitions and serve as another piece of the wildfire community protection puzzle.

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For these reasons, RCRC is proud to sponsor your AB 19. If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton", written in a cursive style.

STACI HEATON
Regulatory Affairs Advocate

cc: Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Consultant, Katie Sperla, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus