

July 19, 2024

The Honorable Buffy Wicks
Assembly Appropriations Committee, Chair
1021 O Street, Suite 8220
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: SB 1159 (Dodd) – California Environmental Quality Act: roadside wildfire risk reduction projects– Support

Dear Chair Wicks:

On behalf of the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC), I write to express our support for SB 1159 (Dodd), which would require the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research to evaluate, and the California Natural Resources Secretary to consider, the inclusion of roadside projects no more than five road miles from a municipality or census-designated place that are undertaken solely for the purpose of wildfire risk reduction in the classes of projects subject to a categorical exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Madera County, with a population of less than 200,000, is facing a significant threat. The acceleration and intensity of wildfires over the past few seasons have decimated many rural areas. These wildfires not only impact lifeline routes, such as State Route 41, but also pose a threat to the only evacuation routes for residents in the corridor. Including roads within a five-mile radius for a CEQA exemption is crucial in protecting property and mitigating future wildfires.

For these reasons, we support SB 1159 when heard in your Assembly Committee on Appropriations. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our legislative advocate, Gus Khouri, at gus@khouriconsult.com or 916-605-8975. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,



Patricia Taylor, Executive Director
Madera County Transportation Commission

cc: Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee