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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

August 28, 2020

The Honorable Ben Hueso  
Chair, Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications  
State Capitol, Room 4035  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**Subject: AB 1659 (Bloom): Large electrical corporations: wildfire mitigation: revenue bonds –  
SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Hueso:

I am writing on behalf of the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors to state our support for AB 1659 (Bloom) as proposed to be amended. The bill would enact the Wildfire Prevention and Community Resilience Act of 2020. The Act would provide immediate funding for at least \$2.5 billion in new revenue for climate and wildfire resiliency related jobs and investments across California. These investments would include improvements in defensible space and home hardening, increasing first responder resources, restoring fire damaged eco-systems, and supporting public outreach and education on increasing fire resiliency. The measure would also provide for an immediate \$500 million allocation for workforce development and fire response to help address California's ongoing threats from COVID-19 unemployment and climate driven mega-fires.

As stated in CSAC's letter dated August 26, 2020, County governments have been on the front lines of responding to these disasters and rebuilding local communities. Our Supervisors have experienced the destruction and increasing frequency of these climate-related disasters and are working to improve preparedness and response across California.

In 2017 and 2018, Santa Barbara County suffered devastating loss due to the Thomas Fire, which was the largest wildfire in California history at the time. After weeks of wildfires, the Santa Barbara County continued to suffer devastating mudslides, which created tremendous loss resulting in widespread debris flows, which resulted in multiple fatalities.

The Board of Supervisors adopted a 2020 Legislative Platform that includes a Community Sustainability and Environmental Protection Legislative Principle, which specifically states that the County will encourage actions to address, prevent and respond to disasters, as well as the Inter-Agency Collaboration Principle, which

states that the County shall support the advocacy efforts of CSAC and collaborate with other entities on mutually beneficial issues.

AB 1659 will provide desperately needed state funding for wildfire reduction and recovery projects to help California respond to the latest round of extreme wildfires the state is experiencing. For these reasons, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors supports AB 1659 (Bloom). If you have questions about the Board's position, please contact the County's Legislative Coordinator, Nancy Anderson at 805-568-3403 or [NAnderson@countyofsb.org](mailto:NAnderson@countyofsb.org).

Sincerely,



Cliff Berg

*Governmental Advocates, Inc.*

cc: Catherine Freeman, CSAC Legislative Advocate  
Members, Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications  
Nidia Bautista, Consultant, Senate Committee on Energy, Utilities and Communications  
Kerry Yoshida, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus  
The Honorable Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson, 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District  
The Honorable Assemblymember Monique Limon, 37<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
The Honorable Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham, 35<sup>th</sup> Assembly District  
Members, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors  
Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer  
Nancy Anderson, Legislative Coordinator, County of Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors