



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

April 3, 2018

The Honorable Susan Talamantes Eggman
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 4117
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2126 – SUPPORT

Dear Assembly Member Eggman:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our support for your Assembly Bill 2126, which creates a forestry corps program within the California Conservation Corps (CCC). RCRC is an association of thirty-five rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from those member counties.

RCRC member counties contain much of California's forested lands, including more than 70 percent of the State's national forest lands. Wildfire risk is no longer just a concern in remote, rural areas, but is becoming a wider public safety concern as the wildland urban interface spreads over larger areas of the State due to climate change and the lingering impacts of the recent five-year drought. Despite the coordinated efforts between State and local governments to mitigate the impacts of wildfire, much work needs to be done throughout the State to bring our forest lands to a healthy, resilient, wildfire-resistant condition.

Wildfire is also a significant source of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and studies predict that wildfire emissions will increase by as much as twenty-four percent over 1961-1990 levels in the next thirty years.¹ The California Air Resources Board estimates that wildfires contribute more than half of California's annual black carbon emissions, a number that will continue to increase as the State's forests continue to burn.²

¹ **Matthew D. Hurteau, Anthony L. Westerling, Christine Wiedinmyer, and Benjamin P. Bryant, "Projected Effects of Climate and Development on California Wildfire Emissions through 2100," *Environmental Science & Technology* 2014, 48, 2298–2304 DOI: dx.doi.org/10.1021/es4050133**

² California Air Resources Board. (2015) Draft Short-Lived Climate Pollutant Reduction Strategy, Appendix A: California SLCP Emissions. Retrieved from <http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/shortlived/2015appendixa.pdf>.

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As we continue to see expanded wildfires into more urbanized areas, reduction of GHG and other criteria pollutant emissions from wildfires will become even more vital to public health.

AB 2126 helps address wildfire, tree mortality, and forest management issues statewide by creating a forestry corps program within the CCC to develop and implement forest health projects including fuels reduction and hazardous fuels removal, tree mortality and tree felling, and forest restoration programs. The forestry corps program will provide another mechanism for the State to address the myriad issues surrounding California's forest health.

For the above reasons, RCRC supports your AB 2126. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at sheaton@rcrcnet.org or (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

STACI HEATON
Regulatory Affairs Advocate

cc: Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
John Kennedy, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus