



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

September 12, 2017

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol Building, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 524 (Bigelow) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to respectfully urge your signature on Assembly Bill 524. AB 524, authored by Assembly Member Frank Bigelow, would allocate fines and settlement funds from the 2015 Butte Fire to the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's State Responsibility Area Fire Prevention Fund and Tree Mortality Grant Program. RCRC is an association of thirty-five rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

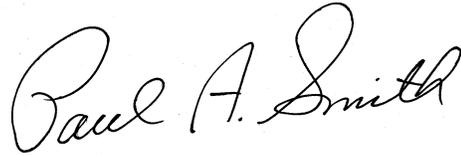
RCRC supports efforts to increase wildfire prevention and tree mortality mitigation efforts throughout the State. California's forested counties are currently suffering myriad impacts from prolonged drought conditions, most notably the tree mortality disaster which has resulted in 102 million dead trees thus far across the Southern and Central Sierras. This slow-moving disaster has left forests riddled with hazard trees that will ultimately either snap and fall or catch fire, resulting in increased black carbon emissions, elevated risk of high severity wildfire, and a profound threat to public safety in the surrounding communities. And while we have had high levels of precipitation this year, it can take several years for forests to recover from severe drought conditions like what we have seen in California, especially when we have no guarantee from year-to-year that drought conditions won't return due to our changing climate. These heavily-impacted areas are also among the most socio-economically challenged areas in the State, and AB 524 would provide much-needed relief to the counties as they struggle to ensure the public health and safety of their residents in the wake of this slow-moving disaster. These are also unencumbered funds, so this measure would not be displacing funds from other programs.

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For the above reasons, RCRC respectfully requests your signature on AB 524.
Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul A. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL A. SMITH
Vice President Governmental Affairs

cc: The Honorable Frank Bigelow, Member of the State Assembly
The Honorable Tom Berryhill, Member of the State Senate
The Honorable Brian Dahle, Member of the State Assembly
The Honorable Jay Obernolte, Member of the State Assembly