



November 3, 2023

The Honorable Salud Carbajal
Member, United States Congress
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: H.R. 6012 – Fire Safe Electrical Corridors Act of 2023- SUPPORT

Dear Congressman Carbajal:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we support your H.R. 6012, the Fire Safe Electrical Corridors Act. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county. RCRC has long advocated for projects and programs that help reduce the risk of future wildfires, improve forest health, and enhance energy resiliency.

RCRC member counties contain much of California's forested lands, including more than 70 percent of the state's national forest lands. Our counties have historically borne the majority of destruction caused by high severity wildfires, many of which have been caused by electrical utility equipment. As such, it is crucial that utilities regularly inspect and maintain their infrastructure, including proper vegetation clearances around utility equipment and powerlines.

Electrical transmission and distribution lines crisscross California's forested landscape, including lands owned by the federal, state, and private landowners. The diversity of forestland ownership brings with it different laws and standards for the management of residual materials that are left after utilities conduct their powerline vegetation clearance activities.

H.R. 6012 seeks to reduce utility-related wildfire risk by breaking down barriers to the removal of dead, dying, hazardous, and fallen trees along utility corridors on Forest Service Lands. Specifically, the legislation allows the Secretary of Agriculture to provide permission to cut and remove trees and other vegetation near powerlines without

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requiring a separate timber sale. Of particular importance, H.R. 6012 allows utilities to remove fuel loads from utility corridors after the clearances are created without the Forest Service having to conduct a timber sale. This reduces the fuel load created by utility vegetation management operations, thereby mitigating the risk and intensity of future fires. Given our recent experiences related to the increased risk and fuel load created when residual materials from utility vegetation management operations were left on private and local government lands, H.R. 6012 is an important measure to ensure that those materials are not just left on the forest floor to fuel future fires.

For these reasons, RCRC is pleased to lend its support to the Fire Safe Electrical Corridors Act. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jkennedy@rcrcnet.org.

Sincerely,



JOHN KENNEDY
Senior Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Jim Costa, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable David Valadao, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Glenn “GT” Thompson, Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture
The Honorable David Scott, Ranking Member, House Committee on Agriculture
The Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources
The Honorable Raul Grijalva, Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources
The Honorable John Duarte, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Jared Huffman, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Sydney Kamlager-Dove, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Doug LaMalfa, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Mike Levin, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Tom McClintock, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Kevin Mullin, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Grace Napolitano, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Katie Porter, Member of the U.S. House of Representatives