



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES  
OF CALIFORNIA

January 14, 2022

The Honorable Autumn Burke  
Member, California State Assembly  
1021 O Street, Suite 5230  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 1644 – SUPPORT  
As Introduced January 12, 2022**

Dear Assembly Member Burke:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we strongly support your Assembly Bill 1644, which would exempt applicants for forest health and fire prevention projects from certain provisions of the California Jobs Plan Act of 2021. RCRC is an association of thirty-eight rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of an elected supervisor from each member county.

RCRC worked diligently with your office to exclude forest health and resilience projects from inclusion in the California Jobs Plan Act of 2021, but a permanent budget allocation to wildfire and forest resilience programs from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) in the 2021-22 State Budget Package folded those projects back into the provisions of the Act and, as such, will have profound impacts on the ability for local governments to execute much needed forest health and resilience projects in high fire risk areas where a skilled local workforce is already difficult to secure. The ability to utilize GGRF dollars through programs like California Climate Investments has afforded rural local governments the ability to undertake such vital projects as clearing dead and dying trees from critical infrastructure and residential properties during California's recent tree mortality epidemic, as well as completing community wildfire mitigation projects in concert with local fire prevention organizations.

By exempting forest health and fire prevention projects from certain standards in the Act that would have disadvantaged rural, fire prone communities that desperately need resources to complete forest resilience projects, AB 1644 alleviates the burden on fire-impacted communities where access to GGRF funding is essential.

RCRC appreciates the work of you and your staff on AB 1644 to clarify the intent for forest health projects under the Act, and for working with RCRC to bring forward this

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The Honorable Autumn Burke  
Assembly Bill 1644  
January 14, 2022  
Page 2

solution. For these reasons, we strongly support AB 1644. If you have any questions or concerns regarding RCRC's position, please do not hesitate to contact me at [sheaton@rcrcnet.org](mailto:sheaton@rcrcnet.org) or (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton", written in a cursive style.

STACI HEATON  
Senior Policy Advocate

Cc: The Honorable Bill Dodd, Member of the California State Senate