



July 15, 2021

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 9 (Wood) – WITHDRAWAL OF SUPPORT
As Amended July 14, 2021**

Dear Senator Portantino:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to formally withdraw our support from the recently-amended Assembly Bill 9, authored by Assembly Member Jim Wood, which would both codify the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity (RFFC) as well as transfer wildfire mitigation programs and duties from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM). RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county.

The previous version of AB 9 would have simply codified the RFFC program under the California Department of Conservation, a program which RCRC strongly supports. The amended AB 9 maintains those provisions, but includes significant changes to how state wildfire mitigation programs are administered by moving several responsibilities from CAL FIRE to the OSFM. While RCRC does not oppose the overall intent behind the amendments to AB 9, we do not have established policy on how the state's wildfire prevention programs should be handled, and given the late stage in the process we need more time to evaluate such a large-scale proposal.

For these reasons, RCRC withdraws our support, and currently has no position on the measure. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at sheaton@rcrcnet.org or (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

STACI HEATON
Senior Regulatory Affairs Advocate

cc: The Honorable Jim Wood, Member of the State Assembly
Members of the Senate Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Senate Appropriations Committee

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