



April 11, 2023

The Honorable Scott Wiener
Chair, Senate Housing Committee

The Honorable Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh
Vice Chair, Senate Housing Committee

RE: Senate Bill 620 (McGuire) Low-Impact Camping Areas: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Wiener, Vice Chair Ochoa Bogh, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we express our support for Senate Bill 620, authored by Senator McGuire. SB 620 bill defines and creates standards for “low-impact camping areas” in order to increase outdoor access for more Californians.

Outdoor recreation hit a record high in 2021 with more than 19 million Californians getting outside.¹ But nearly half of all campers report difficulty finding available campsites². As a result half of all campers (51%) who started camping in the past few years said they camped less often in 2021 due to overcrowding.³ There are too few outdoor recreation accommodations for Californians and visitors.

This bill would increase affordable access to California’s outdoor destinations, from the redwoods to the low desert and from the Sierra to the coastline.

¹ US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, [Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account, U.S. and States, 2021](#)

² [2022 Camping Report. The Dyrn](#)

³ [KOA North American Camping Report 2022](#)

Low-impact camping requires little or no infrastructure and is offered at every price point. This means more Californians can benefit from time outdoors. Because these camping sites are not suitable as long-term housing, low-impact camping increases outdoor access without impacting long-term housing availability.

Specifically, SB 620 would create a definition and corresponding requirements for “low-impact camping areas” in the Health and Safety Code. The bill would also clarify important health and safety distinctions between Special Occupancy Parks and low-impact camping areas by establishing requirements that are appropriate and right-sized for low-impact camping.

SB 620 is a commonsense bill that will help California meet its goals to provide affordable access to the outdoors, develop rural economies, diversify and supplement incomes for farmers, and conserve land and biodiversity. For these reasons, we urge an “aye” vote on SB 620.

Sincerely,

California State Association of Counties
Ada Waelder
Legislative Advocate

California Outdoor Recreation Partnership
Lexie Gritlefeld
Director

Save the Redwoods League
Samuel M. Hodder,
President & CEO

Xerces Society for Invertebrate
Conservation
Matthew Shepherd
Director of Outreach and Education

California Certified Organic Farmers
Rebekah Weber
Policy Director

Latino Outdoors
Jazzari Taylor
Policy Advocate - Advocate for Equity and
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Outdoor Industry Association
Rich Harper
Director, Government Affairs

Hipcamp
Mason Smith
Head of Government and Community
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REI
Tom Bugert
State and Local Government Affairs

California Mountain Biking Coalition
Steve Messer
Board President & Founding Director

Glamping Hub
CJ Wolf
CEO

Little Kamper LP
Josh Simpson
VP of Marketing

Toad & Co.
Gordon Seabury
CEO

Top Rope Media
Meredith McConvill
CEO & Co-Founder

Marmot
Kim Suarez
Raw Materials Specialist

Community Alliance with
Family Farmers
Evan Wiig
Director of Membership & Communications

Rural County Representatives of California
Staci Heaton
Senior Policy Advocate

Outdoor Afro
Rue Mapp
Founder & CEO

Cc: The Honorable Scott Wiener, Senate Housing Committee, Chair
The Honorable Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh, Senate Housing Committee, Vice Chair
The Honorable Members of the Senate Housing Committee
Chief Consultant, Alison Hughes, Senate Housing Committee
Principal Consultant, Mehgie Tabar, Senate Housing Committee
Science Fellow, Aiyana Cortez, Senate Housing Committee
Assistant, Cicely Chisholm, Senate Housing Committee