



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

September 5, 2024

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Assembly Bill 2276 (Wood) — REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Newsom,

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we respectfully request your signature on Assembly Bill 2276 (Wood), which would extend the sunset dates on timber harvest plan exemptions in the Z'berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act of 1973 for the purposes of wildfire mitigation until January 1, 2031. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

Currently, there are three exemptions in statute that exist for the purposes of allowing fuels treatment and vegetation removal to mitigate for wildfire ignitions: 1) The cutting or removal of trees on the a person's property that eliminates the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns for the purpose of reducing flammable materials and maintaining a fuel break (Small Timberland Owner Exemption); (2) The harvesting of those trees that eliminates the vertical continuity of vegetative fuels and the horizontal continuity of tree crowns for specified purposes (Forest Fire Prevention Exemption); and (3) The cutting or removal of trees on a property in compliance with defensible space requirements. Maintaining these exemptions is crucial for the ability of small landowners to maintain their defensible space and manage the vegetation on their properties to safeguard their homes and communities from the threat of catastrophic wildfire. It's also essential to their ability to access and maintain property insurance in the current volatile market.

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All three exemptions are due to sunset soon. AB 2276 would recast the exemptions and set new sunset dates for January 1, 2031, allowing landowners to continue fire-safe maintenance of their properties.

For the above reasons, RCRC respectfully requests your signature on Assembly Bill 2276. Please do not hesitate to contact me at sheaton@rcrcnet.org with any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

STACI HEATON
Senior Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Jim Wood, California State Assembly
Angela Pontes, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor