



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

March 7, 2024

The Honorable Isaac Bryan
Chair, Assembly Natural Resources Committee
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 2276 (Wood) — SUPPORT
As Amended February 26, 2024**

Dear Assembly Member Bryan,

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we support Assembly Bill 2276, authored by Assembly Member Jim 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.

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

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For the above reasons, RCRC supports AB 2276 and urges your aye vote when this bill is heard before your committee. Please do not hesitate to contact me at sheaton@rcrcnet.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

STACI HEATON
Senior Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Jim Wood, California State Assembly
Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee