

May 7, 2018

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez Fletcher
Chair, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 2966 (Aguiar-Curry) Disaster relief. - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez Fletcher:

On behalf of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to support AB 2966 (Aguiar-Curry) which would provide that the state share for the removal of dead and dying trees in connection with the Governor's proclamation of a state of emergency issued on October 30, 2015, is no more than 90% of total state eligible costs under the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA).

Since 2010, over 129 million trees have died in California due to historic drought and the proliferation of a deadly and invasive species of bark beetle. These dead and dying trees often remain standing or lay in place, creating vast areas of highly combustible fuel for wildfires throughout California. This crisis poses a threat to both rural and urban Californians. The crisis is so extreme that in October 2015 the Governor declared a state of emergency and created the Tree Mortality Task Force (TMTF) to address the issue. Comprised of 80 entities, the TMTF represents state, federal, tribal, local agencies, nongovernmental organizations, utility, and energy companies. The group has made significant progress, but more help and resources are needed. Californians have to look no farther than the devastating 2017 wildfires to see the threat that wildfires and tree mortality pose to California.

The California Disaster Assistance Act currently requires the state to share no more than 75% of total eligible costs for disaster project allocations with local agencies. By increasing this share to 90%, AB 2966 would help provide critical funds to local agencies, enabling the removal of additional hazardous trees from our forests.

For these reasons, we urge your Aye vote on AB 2966 (Aguiar-Curry).

Sincerely,

Luis A. Alejo
Chair, Board of Supervisors

cc: The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
Members, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
Jennifer Galehouse, Deputy Chief Consultant, Assembly Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Bill Monning, California State Senate
The Honorable Anthony Cannella, California State Senate
The Honorable Anna Caballero, California State Assembly
The Honorable Mark Stone, California State Assembly
California State Association of Counties

DRAFT