



June 10, 2019

The Honorable Henry Stern
Member, California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5080
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 462 - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Stern,

On behalf of the California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA), we are writing to express our support for your Senate Bill 462, which creates a forest and woodlands restoration workforce curriculum in California Community Colleges to help train and establish a workforce to perform vital forest and woodlands restoration and wildfire prevention work statewide.

Founded in 2014, the California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA) was formed to advocate for increasing the pace and scale of ecologically sound forest restoration practices that can help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire and promote healthier, more resilient forests across California. CAFWA is a nonpartisan, urban-rural coalition representing water interests, local governments, the conservation community, agriculture, and the forestry sector. CAFWA's diverse interests and active work on landscape scale forest resilience projects provide a path for improving the health of California's forests.

As California moves forward with various programs and projects targeted at increasing the state's resilience and resistance to catastrophic wildfire, it has become increasingly evident that we do not have an adequate workforce to implement the work necessary to achieve our forest and watershed restoration and vegetation management goals. There is an urgent need for the development of a forest and woodlands restoration workforce to perform vital fuels treatment



The California Forest Watershed Alliance (CAFWA) is an urban-rural coalition representing water interests, local governments, the conservation community, agriculture, and the forestry sector, created to promote the restoration and improvement of California's forested watersheds. For more information, visit www.caforestsandwatersheds.org.

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and forest and woodlands management work to prevent future wildfires, and we believe that the California Community College system, with its strong presence in the wildland urban interface and rural communities, is a prime candidate for the establishment of such a curriculum.

SB 462 has the potential to provide the exact workforce so desperately needed to not only perform controlled burns and fuels thinning to reduce wildfire and improve forest, woodlands and watershed health, but to also increase job opportunities and bring economic benefits to California's rural, socioeconomically disadvantaged communities.

For these reasons, we support SB 462

Sincerely,



Justin Caporusso, Vice President of External Affairs
Rural County Representatives of California



David Edelson, Forest Program Director
The Nature Conservancy



Rich Gordon, President
California Forestry Association
Agencies



Dave Eggerton, Executive Director
Association of California Water



Robert Spiegel, Governmental Affairs Advocate
California Farm Bureau Federation

cc: Members of the Assembly Higher Education Committee
Consultant, Assembly Higher Education Committee
Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee