

County of Monterey



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

LUIS A. ALEJO, Chair, District 1
GLENN CHURCH, Vice Chair, District 2
CHRIS M. LOPEZ, District 3
WENDY ROOT ASKEW, District 4
MARY L. ADAMS, District 5

May 15, 2023

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: S. 188, the Wildfire Emergency Act – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I write today on behalf of the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors to express our support for S. 188, the Wildfire Emergency Act.

As you know, this legislation utilizes a three-pronged approach to tackle the increasing wildfire threat, namely large-scale forest restoration projects, hardening of critical infrastructure, and increased training of key fire response personnel.

The Wildfire Emergency Act would authorize \$250 million for a new program to conduct large-scale forest restoration projects. Among other things, these landscape-level projects can include removing dead and dying trees, using controlled burns to reduce fuel for larger fires, and clearing out invasive and non-native species.

In addition, the bill would authorize \$100 million in new grant funding to improve the energy resilience of critical infrastructure. Specifically, the program would help retrofit key structures (i.e., hospitals, police departments, fire stations, utilities etc.) so they can function effectively during power shutoffs. Funds also could be used to expand the use of distributed energy systems, including microgrids. Additionally, the legislation would expand the Energy Department's weatherization program so that homes can be retrofitted to make them more resilient to wildfire through the use of fire-resistant building materials and other methods.

We thank you for sponsoring S. 188 and for your attention to the constant wildfire threat facing Monterey County.

Sincerely,

Luis A. Alejo, Chair
Board of Supervisors

Cc: The Honorable Alex Padilla, U.S. Senator