



American Planning Association
California Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

July 20, 2020

Senator Mike McGuire
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, California 95814

SUBJECT: **Support for SB 1199 (McGuire) – Commission on Home Hardening**

Dear Senator McGuire:

The American Planning Association, California Chapter (APA California) is pleased to support your bill, SB 1199. Your bill would establish the Commission on Home Hardening (Commission). The Commission would be required to develop a three-tiered certification system of fire prevention levels for structures in a Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The bill would also require residential property insurers to consider the three-tiered system and certified wildfire community hardening standards in setting rates and issuing insurance.

Over the past few years, California has faced the deadliest and most destructive fires in California's history. Sadly, these and many other wildfires in the recent past have become the state's "new normal," and in turn, both the state and local jurisdictions will need to do more to prepare. SB 1199 would require development of important guidelines and best practices for home hardening and wildfire mitigation for homeowners. In creating these guidelines, the Commission would be required to work with a number of stakeholders, including planning associations and local jurisdictions. APA California supports coordinated efforts that help communities and homeowners better prepare for the mitigation of wildfire hazards.

APA California also supports the insurance coverage requirements specified in the bill. Providing discounts to property owners who take the critical steps to harden their homes, create defensible space and protect their communities are imperative. Creating an incentive to take these important steps not only helps individual homeowners and creates better access to homeowner's insurance, but it also better prepares the community as a whole in wildfire protections.

Unfortunately, there is no doubt that California will continue to face more intense wildfires (and other natural disasters) in the future and we appreciate your efforts on this important issue. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren De Valencia, Stefan/George Associates, APA California's lobbyist, at 443-5301, lauren@stefangeorge.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Eric Phillips'.

Eric Phillips
Vice President Policy and Legislation
APA California

cc: Assembly Governmental Organization Committee
Assembly Republican Caucus
The Governor
The Office of Planning and Research