



April 7, 2025

The Honorable Rhodesia Ransom, Chair
 Assembly Emergency Management Committee
 1020 N Street, Room 360B
 Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 261 (Quirk-Silva) Fire safety: fire hazard severity zones: State Fire Marshal – SPONSOR/SUPPORT as Amended 3/26/2025

Dear Chair Ransom,

I am writing on behalf of the California Building Industry Association, the sponsor of AB 261, and a broad coalition of organizations in support. This good government measure would strengthen the development of California's Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) maps by authorizing the State Fire Marshal to confer with individuals and entities, including public agencies, nonprofits, and tribes, regarding actions affecting fire hazard severity zones between official reviews.

FHSZ map revisions occur intermittently, and this infrequency limits the ability for stakeholders to inform the Fire Marshal about mitigation actions that may impact and improve the degree of fire hazard within an area. Perhaps more importantly, AB 261 establishes a process to seek the advice of the Fire Marshal on measures these individuals or entities may implement to reduce the degree of fire hazard within an area. AB 261 offers a proactive solution by allowing a thoughtful dialogue between entities and the State Fire Marshal before the next state review. To ensure transparency, the correspondence and documentation exchanged between the State Fire Marshal and other entities would be made available on the State Fire Marshal's website for public access. A fee may be charged to entities that engage with the State Fire Marshal regarding their fire hazard severity zone assessments to offset associated costs of the implementation of the bill.

AB 261 improves the development of FHSZ maps by increasing public participation in the process and by allowing the State Fire Marshal to engage in an information exchange between cycles. FHSZ maps impact millions of Californians, as they influence the availability and affordability of insurance, the information provided to property owners of the relative hazard they may face, and the cost of housing. AB 261 will support informed decision-making, encourage fire prevention efforts, and ultimately strengthen community resilience across California.

For the reasons outlined above, our coalition is pleased to support AB 261.

Sincerely,



Karim Drissi
Senior Vice President of Legislative Affairs
California Building Industry Association



Adam Regele
Vice President Advocacy and Strategic Partnerships
California Chamber of Commerce



Matthew Hargrove
President & Chief Executive Officer
California Business Properties Association, BOMA California, and NAIOP California



Debra Carlton
Executive Vice President State Government Affairs
California Apartment Association



Ryan Allain
Government Affairs Director
California Retailers Association



Lori Holt Pfeiler
President & CEO
Building Industry Association of San Diego



Bob Glover
Executive Officer
Building Industry Association of the Bay Area



Lindy Hatcher
Executive Director
Home Builders Association of the Central Coast



John Beckman
Chief Executive Officer
Building Industry Association of the Greater Valley



Lynn Mohrfeld
President + CEO
California Hotel + Lodging Association



Mike Roos
President
Southern California Leadership Council

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Brian Brennan". The signature is stylized with a large, looping "B" and a cursive "Brennan".

Brian Brennan
Executive Director
21st Century Alliance

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara Catalán". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sara Catalán
Executive Director
Orange County Taxpayers Association

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Andersen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Andersen
Director, Forest Policy
Mendocino Humboldt Redwood Companies

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey Ball". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jeffrey Ball
President and CEO
Orange County Business Council

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Victoria Hernandez". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Victoria Hernandez
Executive Director
South Orange County Economic Coalition

Steve Westly
Founder, Westly Group
Former California State Controller

cc: The Honorable Members of the Assembly Emergency Management Committee
The Honorable Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva, Author
Ryan Fleming, Associate Consultant, Assembly Emergency Management Committee
Rose Rastbaf, Policy Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus