



COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

Board of Supervisors

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March 21, 2025

The Honorable Susan Rubio
Chair, Senate Insurance Committee
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Room 3310
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 616 (Rubio) – Community Hardening Commission: Wildfire Mitigation Program -
SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Rubio:

The Mendocino County Board of Supervisors is writing to express its strong support for Senate Bill 616. This pivotal legislation proposes the establishment of the Community Hardening Commission dedicated to enhancing wildfire mitigation efforts across California.

Wildfires have had devastating impacts on rural areas in California. Between 2000 and 2020, approximately 16.7 million acres burned across the state, equating to 15.9% of California's total land area. Notably, 43.7% of this burned area occurred in just three years: 2008, 2018, and 2020. Mendocino County has experienced significant wildfires, including the Ranch and River Fires in 2018, the Redwood Fire in 2017, and the August Complex Fire in 2020. The Mendocino Lightning Complex in 2008 burned 54,817 acres, caused \$48.5 million in damages, and injured 47 people. The 2017 Redwood Complex Fire was one of California's top 20 deadliest, claiming 9 lives, injuring 21, and destroying over 548 structures.

SB 616 will create community hardening standards to mitigate wildfire risks and improve insurance access for residents and businesses. The bill seeks to protect homes and increase community resilience by coordinating policies among state agencies and enhancing data-sharing.

Establishing the Community Hardening Commission is a proactive step toward safeguarding Mendocino County and enhancing fire insurance accessibility. SB 616 is vital for strengthening wildfire resilience across California and ensuring the safety of our residents.

For these reasons, Mendocino County urges the swift passage of SB 616. We appreciate your leadership on this critical issue and look forward to working together to bolster wildfire mitigation efforts statewide.

Sincerely,

John Haschak, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: The Honorable Mike McGuire, California State Senate, 2nd District
The Honorable Chris Rogers, California State Assembly, 2nd District

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