

June 17, 2014

To: The Honorable Fran Pavley, Chair
The Honorable Anthony J. Cannella, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee

From: Rex D. Frazier, President
Michael A. Gunning, Vice President
Kara Cross, General Counsel
Manolo P. Platin, Senior Legislative Advocate

Re: AB 1867 (Patterson) Timber Harvest Plans: Exemption: Reducing Flammable Materials



STATE FARM

FARMERS

LIBERTY MUTUAL
INSURANCE

PROGRESSIVE

ALLSTATE

MERCURY

NATIONWIDE

**Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee Hearing, June 24, 2014
PIFC Position: Support**

The Personal Insurance Federation of California, representing seven of the nation's largest insurance companies (State Farm, Farmers, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Progressive, Allstate, Mercury and Nationwide) who collectively write a majority of the personal line auto and home insurance in California, **supports AB 1867 Timber Harvest Plans: Exemption: Reducing Flammable Materials by Assemblymember Jim Patterson.**

AB 1867 would help safeguard California against wildfires by making an exemption in the California Forest Practices Act to allow residents of the State Responsibility Area who are engaged in forest maintenance activities to remove potentially hazardous timber and other vegetative fuels for up to 300 feet on each side of a legally permitted structure. The bill would also authorize landowners to sell any timber that is cut or removed within this 300 foot radius as part of forest maintenance practices.

Vegetation thinning projects can significantly decrease the chance of wildfires but in the past decade the thinning of private forest lands has dropped to fewer than 1000 acres a year. By allowing landowners to sell the resultant leavings of fire-maintenance activities, AB 1867 would provide an additional financial incentive for residents and local Fire Safe Councils to complete more vegetation removal around their homes and communities, and to engage local companies and residents in fire-reduction projects around their defensible spaces. By raising the limit of how much vegetation may be cleared around an allowed property from 150 to 300 feet, Local Fire Safe Councils will have a further incentive to hire local timber harvesting and vegetation reduction specialists.

For this reason, PIFC **supports AB 1867 Timber Harvest Plans by Assemblymember Patterson and urges your "aye" vote.** If you have any questions regarding PIFC's position, please contact Manolo P. Platin at (916) 442-6646.

cc: Assemblymember Jim Patterson, Author
William Craven, Chief Consultant, Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
Steve McCarthy, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus
Gareth Elliot, Secretary of Legislative Affairs, Office of the Governor
Robert Herrell, Legislative Director, California Department of Insurance