

Date March 5th, 2019

To: The Honorable Bill Dodd, Chair
The Honorable Scott Wilk, Vice Chair
Members, Senate Governmental Organization Committee

From: Rex D. Frazier, President
Seren Taylor, Senior Legislative Advocate

Re: SB 190 (Dodd) Fire Safety: Building Standards

Senate Governmental Organization Committee Hearing, March 12th, 2019

PIFC Position: Support if Amended



STATE FARM

LIBERTY MUTUAL
INSURANCE

PROGRESSIVE

MERCURY

NATIONWIDE

The Personal Insurance Federation of California (PIFC) is a statewide trade association that represents five of the nation's largest insurance companies (State Farm, Liberty Mutual Insurance, Progressive, Mercury, and Nationwide) who collectively write a majority of the personal line auto and home insurance in California. PIFC is pleased to support SB 190, a measure that will increase the level of awareness and compliance with California's defensible space requirements. However, because insurers and their research partners offer valuable data and experience in this program area that can greatly contribute to the effort, we respectfully request the following amendment be added to include a representative from the insurance industry on the list of consulting stakeholders specified in the bill:

*Sec. 1 (d) (1) The Office of the State Fire Marshal shall develop a model defensible space program that shall be made available for use by a city, county, or city and county in the enforcement of the defensible space provisions of Section 51182 of this code and subdivision (a) of Section 4291 of the Public Resources Code. In the development of this program, the State Fire Marshal shall consult with representatives from local, state, and federal fire services, local government, building officials, utility companies, **insurers and insurance research organizations**, the building industry, and the environmental community. Components of the program shall include, but not be limited to, the following:*

PIFC has long supported legislation to develop model defensible space programs and improved fire safety building standards in order to promote positive action by building owners, contractors and local government. A defensible space area around a building in which vegetation, debris, and other types of combustible fuels have been treated, cleared, or reduced can help slow the spread of fire to and from the building. It is one of the most cost-effective ways to protect a building from a wildfire and can often be created by the property owner.

SB 190 will help encourage a greater understanding of California's requirements for defensible space around structures, which is beneficial for all of our communities. For this reason, PIFC supports SB 190 with the suggested amendment. If you have any questions regarding PIFC's position, please contact Seren Taylor at (916) 442-6646.

cc: Felipe Lopez, Chief Consultant, Senate Governmental Organization Committee
Richard Paul, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus
Ronda Paschal, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of the Governor
Michael Martinez, Senior Deputy Commissioner and Legislative Director, California Department of Insurance