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Senator Dave Min
Chair, Senate Natural Resources Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3220
Sacramento, CA 95814

April 21, 2023

RE: SB 470 (Alvarado-Gil): Wildfires: Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program: Grant Eligibility: High Fire Hazard and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Min:

On behalf of the Mountain Counties Water Resource Board of Directors, I'm writing to lend our support to Senate Bill 470, which includes projects that reduce the risk of wildfire for communities through water delivery system improvements within the list of projects eligible for block grants from the Department of Conservation's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program. This legislation would provide much needed additional funding for wildfire defense and protection of rural communities.

California has experienced the deadliest and most destructive wildfires in its history in recent years. Fueled by drought and unprecedented buildup of dry vegetation and extreme winds, the size and intensity of these wildfires caused the loss of life, destroyed thousands of homes and structures, and exposed millions of urban and rural Californians to unhealthy air.

Support for projects that reduce the risk of wildfire must be increased in the high and very high hazard severity zones in order to protect property, resources, public facilities, infrastructure and, most importantly protect human life.

MCWRA advocates for the water interests of its 58 members in 12 of the mountain counties within the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) of woodland and forested lands in the Sierra Nevada. These foothill and mountain areas contain

the headwaters for 40% of the state's developed water supply, which also provides for hydropower production, irrigation, recreation, water recycling, tourism, and instream flows that fuel the engine of our State's economy.

Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions regarding our position.

Sincerely,

Scott Ratterman, President
Mountain Counties Water Resources Association