



## **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH POLICY COALITION**

May 6, 2024

The Honorable Mike McGuire  
Senate President pro Tempore  
1021 O Street, Room 8518  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### **Re: SB 946 (McGuire) Wildfire Home Hardening Grants – SUPPORT**

Dear Senate Pro tem McGuire,

The Northern California Youth Policy Coalition (NCYPC) writes to express our support for Senate Bill 946 by Senator McGuire.

The Northern California Youth Policy Coalition represents youth from over thirty counties across Northern California from the North Coast to the North State to Sacramento. We seek to give a voice to rural youth who feel unheard and a platform to come together to advocate for issues that are most important to our rural youth in Northern California. Our main objective is to ensure that the youth voices of this region are heard on local, regional and state levels, where decisions make a direct impact on our rural communities.

Just in the past decade, California has experienced 14 of its 20 most destructive wildfires in the state's history with over 55,000 homes and businesses damaged or destroyed by mega fires. These losses have resulted in more than \$45 billion in insured losses, causing insurers to reduce or even completely stop offering home insurance coverage in the state.

Home hardening is one of the best ways to reduce a home's risk for damage or loss from a wildfire. Retrofitting a home with fire-resistant materials can reduce wildfire risk by up to 40%, and when combined with vegetation management, can reduce wildfire risk by up to 75%. These retrofits and management practices can be expensive, ranging in costs from \$30,000 to \$40,000 to fully update a home to the highest fire-resistant standards.

In 2019, the California Wildfire Mitigation Program (CWMP) was created to assist homeowners in making fire resilient improvements to their homes. The program provides financial assistance through grants up to \$40,000 to support home hardening work for homeowners in high fire severity zones and is targeted towards residents in poverty, with disabilities or language barriers, seniors, or those without a car. However, these grants are currently considered taxable income under state law meaning that homeowners would have to pay additional taxes on these crucial home hardening projects.

SB 946 will exclude grants received through the CWMP from being considered part of one's taxable income under state law. This will ensure that homeowners will be able to use the full

***ORGANIZED VOICES FOR RURAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH***

[infoncypc@gmail.com](mailto:infoncypc@gmail.com) | (707) 349-6127 | [www.ncypc.com](http://www.ncypc.com)



## **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH POLICY COALITION**

amount of funds that they receive from the CWMP towards home hardening projects without needing to pay thousands of dollars in additional income taxes. SB 946 will ensure that homeowners are able to participate in the CWMP to proactively protect their homes from wildfires, making California safer against future wildfires.

For these reasons, the Northern California Youth Policy Coalition urges your support for SB 946. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bode Gower  
Chair,  
Northern California Youth Policy Coalition (NCYPC)

***ORGANIZED VOICES FOR RURAL NORTHERN CALIFORNIA YOUTH***

[infoncypc@gmail.com](mailto:infoncypc@gmail.com) | (707) 349-6127 | [www.ncypc.com](http://www.ncypc.com)