



CITY OF LA VERNE CITY HALL

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April 15, 2025

Assembly Natural Resources Committee
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted via the Legislative Position Letter Portal

RE: Support for AB 846 (Connolly) – Endangered Species: Incidental Take: Wildfire Preparedness Activities

Dear Honorable Assembly Committee on Natural Resources,

On behalf of the City of La Verne, I write to express our strong support for Assembly Bill 846, which proposes a critical and timely pathway for cities and local agencies to conduct wildfire preparedness activities within designated fire hazard severity zones, while responsibly minimizing impacts to endangered, threatened, and candidate species.

La Verne is a small city situated adjacent to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), an area at the confluence of natural habitats and urban development. As such, we are uniquely vulnerable to the growing threat of catastrophic wildfires—a threat that has been exacerbated by climate change and increasingly volatile fire seasons. Each year, the stakes grow exponentially, as do the barriers to proactive fire mitigation due to lengthy and cumbersome permitting processes under the California Endangered Species Act.

AB 846 offers a much-needed solution. It empowers cities like La Verne to develop locally tailored wildfire preparedness plans that are aligned with conservation goals while enabling timely, preventative action. By streamlining the review and permitting process through the Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and offering clear guidance within a defined timeline, this bill addresses a persistent challenge faced by municipalities operating within high-risk fire zones.

This legislation is not only practical, but essential. It acknowledges the reality that effective wildfire mitigation cannot be delayed by procedural gridlock, especially when such delays could cost lives, property, and irreparably damage ecosystems.

We thank you for your leadership on this issue and urge the Legislature to advance AB 846. It is a forward-thinking, balanced approach that upholds environmental stewardship while prioritizing the safety of California communities.

Sincerely,

Tim Hepburn
Mayor