



COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

1312 Fairlane Rd, Suite 1
Yreka, California 96097
www.co.siskiyou.ca.us

(530) 842-8005
Toll Free: 1-888-854-2000, ext. 1

August 18, 2026

The Honorable Monique Limón
Senate President pro Tempore
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 8518
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Robert Rivas
Assembly Speaker
California State Assembly
1021 O Street, Suite 8330
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Opposition to Proposed Limits on Public Agency Recovery for Utility Caused Wildfires

Dear Senate President pro Tempore Limón and Assembly Speaker Rivas,

The Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors strongly opposes proposed wildfire liability reforms, as prompted by the SB 254 Report, that would limit the ability of public agencies to recover damages from utilities responsible for causing wildfires. These proposals would shift substantial costs from responsible utilities to local governments and taxpayers at the very time communities are struggling to recover.

When a utility-caused wildfire damages roads, water systems, or other essential public infrastructure, public agencies must be able to recover the cost of rebuilding. Limiting cost recovery to the depreciated value of damaged infrastructure could leave local governments financially responsible for rebuilding essential public facilities without sufficient funding.

We are equally concerned about proposals to limit recovery for emergency response, mutual aid, and lost property tax revenue. Local governments rely on property taxes to fund essential services, while emergency response and mutual aid costs must often be paid upfront. FEMA reimbursement is not guaranteed, is subject to eligibility requirements, and may take years to receive. Restricting recovery from responsible utilities could place significant financial strain on public agencies and weaken the mutual aid system communities depend on during emergencies.

Meaningful wildfire reform should instead focus on preventing wildfires before they start and holding utilities accountable for safety through grid hardening, vegetation management, fuel reduction, and stronger oversight and enforcement.

For these reasons, we urge the Legislature to reject any proposal that limits public agency recovery and shifts wildfire costs away from responsible utilities.

Jess Harris
District 1

Ed Valenzuela
District 2

Michael N. Kobseff
District 3

Nancy Ogren
District 4

Ray Haupt
District 5



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Sincerely,

Signed by:

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Ray A. Haupt
Chair, Board of Supervisors

CC: Senator Megan Dahle
Assemblymember Heather Hadwick
Rural County Representatives of California
California State Association of Counties
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange
Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors

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