NEW: Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis Co-Sponsors Sen. Ben Allen's SB 894 As Wildfire Home-Hardening Bill Passes Senate Appropriations Committee

State-Backed, Low-Interest Wildfire Resilience Loan Program Will Unlock Access to Wildfire Home Retrofits for Homeowners Across the State

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – SB 894, first-of-its-kind legislation aimed at making wildfire safety upgrades affordable, passed unanimously out of the Senate Appropriations Committee yesterday and is now being co-sponsored by Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis. The legislation, which is also co-sponsored by Megafire Action and California State Treasurer Fiona Ma, would create a state-backed, low-interest loan program to make wildfire safety upgrades achievable for middle-income households. The program is modeled on the State Treasurer's successful GoGreen energy-finance platform, which has already demonstrated how public backing can unlock private capital at scale.

"SB 894 is a critical step toward giving middle-income homeowners the tools they need to better protect their homes and communities from growing wildfire threats," said **Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis.** "I thank Senator Ben Allen for his leadership in advancing this forward-thinking measure, which expands access to affordable financing for home hardening and defensible space improvements. As wildfire seasons become more destructive and insurance instability continues to impact Californians, this bill helps shift our approach from recovery to prevention and resilience."

"We know steps we take today to improve resilience pays tremendous dividends down the line," said **Senator Ben Allen (D-Pacific Palisades).** "However, the financial undertaking of certain home renovations prevents too many Californians from taking these needed steps that will save lives and property. I appreciate Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis'—and my colleagues in the Appropriations Committee—recognition and support of this proposal that will lower this financial barrier, help Californians stay in their homes, and improve access to quality, affordable insurance."

"We are grateful to Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis for her leadership in cosponsoring SB 894," said **Eric Horne, California Director at Megafire Action**. "Her support as a statewide elected official underscores the growing recognition that California needs scalable wildfire solutions that can help homeowners across the state take meaningful mitigation measures. As the bill continues to advance through the legislature, we look forward to partnering with Lieutenant Governor Kounalakis to get this bill across the finish line."

This bill is supported by the American Property Casualty Insurance Association, California Chamber of Commerce, California Credit Union League, City of Los Angeles, Consumer Watchdog, Environmental Defense Fund, Personal Insurance Federation of California, The Nature Conservancy, and many other groups.

SB 894 represents an opportunity for the legislature to take immediate action on a concept highlighted by the recently released SB 254 Natural Catastrophe Study — "Piloting a State-supported loan loss or loan guarantee program would provide security or guarantee to capital lenders lending low-cost loans to homeowners." By leveraging private capital, the proposed program would create a long-term, sustainable financing engine capable of upgrading hundreds of thousands of homes over the next decade. Fifty percent of homeowners in California's highest-risk fire areas identify cost as the biggest barrier to making wildfire-resilient upgrades to their homes, underscoring the need for scalable financial assistance that can help reach homeowners across the state.This investment is essential to reducing catastrophic home loss, improving community resilience, and stabilizing California's distressed homeowners insurance market. This legislation jumpstarts a centralized GoGreen-style platform that will outline required mitigation work, expected cost savings, financing options, and certified contractors.

Polling conducted by Megafire Action underscores the urgency and appeal of this approach: **83%** of California voters support financial incentives for fire-resistant home upgrades and **81%** support certifications that could lead to insurance discounts.

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